

**Examining the Participation of Women in the Formulation of Food and Agricultural sector  
Development Policy (FASDEP II): A Case Study in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality of Ghana.**

**By**

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## **Abstract**

Women play a significant role in the agricultural sector in Ghana, and yet they often lack power in making decisions and creating policies in the agricultural sector. More research is needed to understand how rural women have been involved in policymaking, barriers to participation, and what can be done to improve participation. To address this gap, my research employed a qualitative case study approach to examine women's involvement in agricultural decision-making in general and the formulation of the current agriculture policy dubbed "Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy (FASDEP II)" in the Ejisu-Juaben Municipality in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. Using semi-structured interviews with farmwomen and agricultural stakeholders, I found that the majority of women participate in agricultural decision-making in their houses and communities. Most women in the study were part of Farmer-Based Organizations (FBOs), in contrast to previous research; however, most rural women faced barriers participating in decision-making at the Municipal Assembly-level due to factors such as patriarchal culture, inadequate resources, organizational/representational barriers, and low level of education. Regarding FASDEP II specifically, women faced similar barriers to participation as well as a lack of good communication about participation in policymaking. To enhance women's participation in agricultural decisions and policymaking, the farmwomen and stakeholders in the study suggested more informal education, adequate resources for community consultation, and strengthening organizational structures as well as effective coordination and communication between government officials and rural farmers. Policies can be successfully implemented when the national authorities involve the beneficiaries in their design and planning.

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### **List of Abbreviations**

BUREC	Brandon University Research Ethics Committee
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women
CID	Council for International Development
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
EJMA-MTDP	Ejisu-Juaben Municipal Assembly-Medium Term Development Plan
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FASDEP	Food and Agricultural sector Development Policy
FBOs	Farmer-Based Organizations
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IFAD	International Fund for Agriculture Development,
MOFA	Ministry of Food and Agriculture
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities,
WFAN	Women, Food and Agricultural Network is

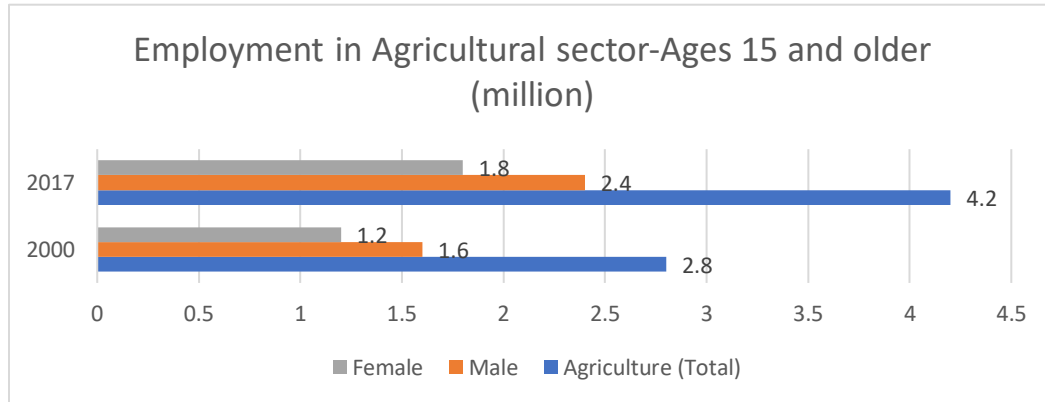
## **Chapter One**

### **General Introduction**

#### **1.1 Background**

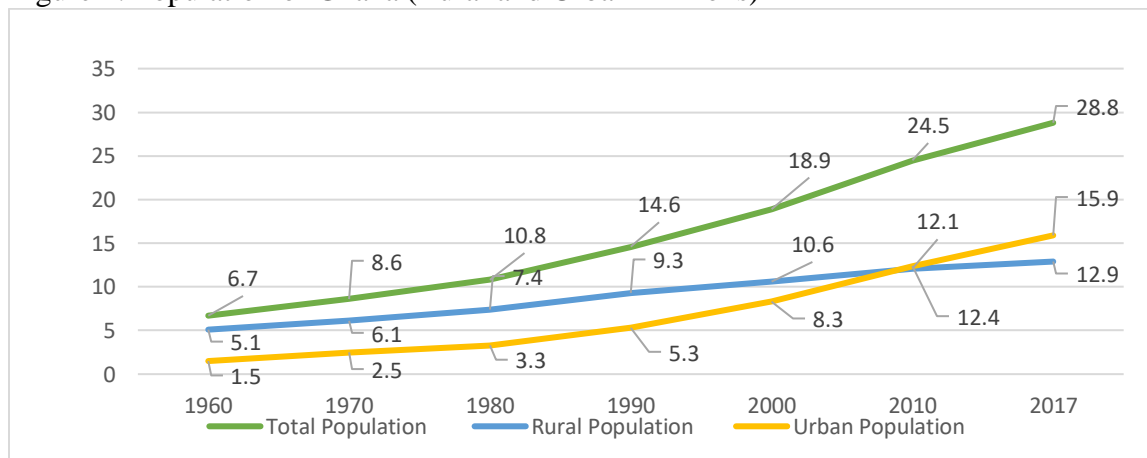
Agriculture is the pillar of economic growth and the backbone of development in Ghana. The development of the agricultural sector has influenced the overall economic performance since independence (Asuming, 2004). For instance, in 1990, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Ghana's economy increased by 3.3 percent because the GDP growth rate of the agricultural sector was negative 2 percent. However, the GDP of Ghana's economy increased by 5.3 percent in 1991 as a result of an increased GDP in the agricultural sector by 5.8 percent (Asuming, 2004). The agricultural sector further contributes to the development of other sectors of the economy especially the industrial sector through the supply of raw materials (Duncan, 1997; MOFA, 2007; World Bank, 2018). The sector again provides foreign exchange to Ghana through the export of cash crops such as cocoa, coffee, and cotton; hence, the sector helps to generate revenue for the government (Asuming, 2004). Ghana is the second-largest cocoa-producing country in the world and the cocoa sector has attained significant growth, resulting in a substantial poverty reduction (Vigneri & Kolavalli, 2017). Additionally, the agricultural sector offers employment. The sector has employed approximately 4.2 million inhabitants, including 2.4 million males and 1.8 million females in Ghana (World Bank Group, 2017). Employment in this sector has increased significantly since 2000, (see figure 1), and approximately 12.9 million inhabitants are living in rural areas (see figure 2 below) in Ghana and are employed particularly in the agricultural sector. Agriculture enhances livelihood for rural farmers especially women and they contribute to the agricultural sector's achievements in Ghana's economy.

Figure 1: Employment in the Agricultural Sector in Ghana



Source: Calculated from World Development Indicator, World Bank Group (2017)

Figure 2: Population of Ghana (Rural and Urban-Millions)



Source: Adapted from World Development Indicators of World Bank Group (2017)

Women play a key role in the agricultural sector in Ghana, constituting about 36 percent of the agricultural labor force (World Bank Group, 2017). They contribute to all sectors of agriculture including fishing, livestock, food crops, cash crops, forestry, and others. According to Duncan (1997), women are key actors in the food chain starting from farm production, market, and intrahousehold food distribution. Rural women are the producers of all major crops especially food crops particularly on a small scale in Ghana (Doss 2002; Carr 2008). In contrast, their male counterparts cultivate cash crops on a large scale for commercial purposes. Hudu

(2017) argued that women currently contribute to the production of cash crops, which also contribute significantly to the GDP growth of Ghana.

Despite women's significant roles in the agricultural sector, they face challenges affecting their productivity and efficiency. Therefore, women are marginalized in the agricultural sector more than their male counterparts despite the significant contribution they make.

Additionally, women's roles are not recognized. Duncan (1997) stressed, "there is a lack of recognition of women role because their area of operation falls within the informal sector of the economy, which is largely associated with unskilled and unprofessional tasks", (p.21). Duncan further explained that women provide roles, which are invisible to the rural economy. The invisible roles of women include domestic activities and, in most cases, subsistence activities for the living standard of their families. Additionally, scholars from different disciplines argued that women's actual outputs are difficult to calculate since they work together with men. For instance, Doss (2002) noted that women's food production is difficult to calculate since women do not cultivate crops separately from men and food production requires both women's and men's labor contributions. However, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA) has provided information on the quantity of women's production in some districts like Kwabre East District in Ghana. Nevertheless, there is inadequate disaggregated data of gender, locality or district to promote efficient decision-making to address gender inequalities in rural areas (Ofosu, 2012). This issue has contributed to a general lack of recognition of women's roles in the economic growth of Ghana.

Another challenge facing women's productivity in the agricultural sector is gender inequality in resource allocation and distribution, participation in agriculture decision-making as well as leadership positions at the local and national level. Amu (2004) and Duncan (1997)

highlighted that women lack productive resources in areas such as education, land acquisition, agriculture extension and credit, which affects their productivity and efficiency in the agricultural sector. Quaye et al, (2016) also indicated that women participate less than men in agricultural decision-making in their communities in Ghana related to productive assets such as land, credit, extension services, and technology for production. The factors identified by the scholars include cultural and religious factors, low level of education, low level of confidence, low economic, as well as social and political power experienced by women. Ragsdale et al, (2018) highlighted that approximately 62 percent of men solely make agriculture household decisions in Northern Ghana whereas 38 percent of women solely or jointly make decisions in agriculture households. The agriculture household decisions include the sale of productive assets such as farmland, animals, farm equipment and others. Therefore, the small percentage of women who make decisions include men sometimes. There is little literature on women's participation in decision-making in the household, communities and municipal assemblies in Ghana; hence, my research will examine the participation of women in decision-making in their houses, communities and Municipal Assembly, and inform women's involvement in policymaking in the municipality.

Additionally, women face barriers to joining and participating in Farmer-Based Organizations (FBO's) in Ghana due to factors such as access to farm size, credit, education, machinery, and income (Asante et al., 2011). There are a small number of females only FBOs in Ghana. Salifu et al (2012) indicated in their research that four out of 24 FBOs studied in Ghana are female only. However, leaders of the four groups are sometimes men due to the low educational level of most women who are not able to read and write effectively. The accessibility and participation of women in FBOs, in other words, affect women's participation in the

formulation of agriculture policies in Ghana because Peterson (1999) stresses that FBOs serve as a medium for involvement, which increases advocacy for participation. Asante et al (2011) emphasized that FBOs currently promote the ideas of their members in various mediums on policymaking and play a vital role in local development planning and agriculture development. FBOs have a great impact on addressing some productive problems and enhance the active participation of women in decision-making in agriculture at the local and national levels. Regarding my literature review from different scholars, there is little literature on women's accessibility and their participation in FBOs' decision-making. Besides, there is little research on women represented by their FBOs in the national decision-making or policymaking in Ghana. If women's participation in decision-making at the national level is low, their productivity and efficiency can be affected negatively. This developmental problem needs more attention to be addressed. However, researchers and feminist scholars have not paid much attention to this problem. To address this gap, my research will examine how women in FBOs were involved in the formulation of the Food and Agricultural sector Development Policy (FASDEP II) in the Ejisu-Juaben Municipality particularly. The research will take into consideration how women join and participate in the FBOs in the selected communities and examine how these organisations help those women to contribute to the formulation of the agriculture policy in the municipality. Since agriculture policy in any country aims to address problems faced by farmers to enhance their productivity, there is the need to include them in the decision-making process to ensure the successful implementation of such policy.

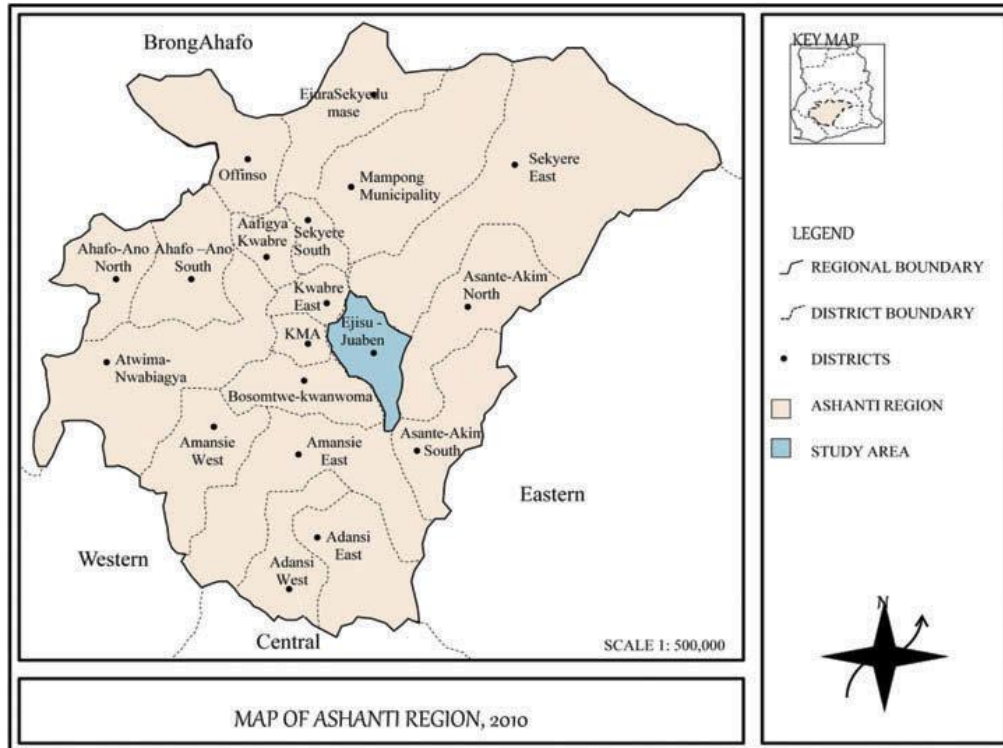
The research will employ feminist theories to understand the strategic ways to improve the lives of women in the world and promote equity. Men and women are not necessarily striving for the same things, but they deserve fairness. There have been emerging women's movements

over the last four decades in agriculture because of the challenges facing farmwomen in mainstreaming agriculture organizations. The goal of such movements was to educate and organize women for change in food production and agriculture sustainability (Trauger, 2004). However, feminist theory has traditionally focused on western, white, urban, middle-class women (Basu, 1990; Sach, 2018); and focused less on rural women's livelihoods. Sach (2018) accentuated that rural women constitute a kind of category of women that theorists have not completely considered. Based on my literature review, there is little research employing feminist theories concerning the participation of women in agriculture policymaking outside of western countries. As such, my research is aimed to fill the feminist theory gap by focusing on rural women and women's participation in agriculture policymaking in developing countries such as Ghana.

This study is to specifically examines the involvement of women in the formulation of the current agriculture policy dubbed "Food and Agricultural Sector Development Policy (FASDEP II)" in the Ejisu-Juaben Municipality in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The study takes into consideration the involvement of women in decision-making in the households, communities, FBOs and the Municipal Assembly and how that can inform involvement in policymaking in the municipality.

The area under study is the Ejisu-Juaben Municipality in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The municipality shares boundaries with six other districts including Kwabre, Afigya Sekyere, Asante Akim North, Asante Akim South and Bosomtwi Kwanwoma Districts (see figure 3). The municipality is located in the central part of the Ashanti Region and lies within latitude 1.15°N and 1.45°N and longitude 6.15°W and 7.00°W.

Figure 3: Map of Ejisu Juaben Municipality in Regional Context



Source: (Acheampong & Dinye ,2015)

## 1.2 Research Objectives

The overall objective of the research is to examine women's involvement in agricultural policymaking in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality. The research will specifically achieve the following sub objectives:

1. To examine how women were included in the formulation of the FASDEP II in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality.
2. To identify factors hindering women's involvement in the formation of FASDEP II in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality.
3. To make recommendations for municipal policy and practice that will promote more meaningful and comprehensive participation of women.



### **1.3 Research Questions**

The research aimed to answer four main questions as follows:

1. How are women involved in agricultural decision-making at home, the community and in agricultural organizations?
2. How were women in agriculture involved in the formulation of FASDEP II?
3. What factors hindered women in agriculture to participate in the formulation of FASDEP II in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality?
4. What recommendations can facilitate a more meaningful and comprehensive participation of women?

The study examined women's involvement in decision making in their homes, communities and agriculture organisations to identify their barriers in any of these settings in decision making; to know if women have power and resources to act on their decisions, and how those can inform their involvement in policymaking.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Conceptual Framework and Literature Review**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, I discuss the conceptual foundation of my research on examining the participation of women in the formulation of FASDEP II in Ghana. Specifically, my research draws from bodies of literature from interdisciplinary and disciplinary sources such as development, geography, economics, and feminism to identify research gaps with respect to women's participation in agriculture policymaking. In the sections that follow, I explain concepts, such as women's empowerment, gender equity, gender equality and gender mainstreaming to help analyse the research findings and results.

#### **2.2 Feminist Theory and Participation of Women in Development**

There has been an emerging agricultural women's movement over the last four decades. For instance, the Women, Food and Agricultural Network (WFAN) is among the emerging groups of women farmers, activists, educators, and academics in Iowa who were devoted "to link and amplify women's voices on issues of food systems, sustainable communities and environmental integrity" (Wells, 1998, p. 375). The group was set up due to the challenges facing farmwomen, hence, it was mandated to educate and organise women for change in food production and agriculture sustainability (Trauger, 2004). Additionally, feminist academic, Ester Boserup, reviewed the variations in traditional agricultural practices during the period of modernisation and studied the numerous effects leading to differences in men's and women's work output (Rathgeber, 1990). Boserup (2012) emphasised that women were predominantly involved in agricultural activities in sparsely populated areas, but men were involved in commercial agricultural production in densely populated areas using modern technologies.

Boserup and Liljencrantz (1976) also highlighted that rural women play a greater role in agricultural communities especially in subsistence farming in the United States, but there has been little effort to train them in modern agriculture techniques. On the contrary, their male counterparts are mostly trained into modern agriculture. According to Boserup and Liljencrantz (1976), women's problems such as inadequate training opportunities can be resolved when they are actively included in the national development process.

In that case, policymaking can include women's participation to identify their developmental problems and can be resolved through good strategies grounded in women's knowledge and experiences. Additionally, women should have increased access to education together with programs for training to practice modern agriculture (Boserup & Liljencrantz, 1976). Boserup and Liljencrantz (1976) emphasised that women should be actively involved in the formulation and implementation of plans to enhance a greater impact of the programmes.

The feminist movements over the years were informed by feminist theories and the theories are very relevant to understand the strategic ways to improve the lives of women through development and theoretical reflection on gender (Acker, 2004, p. 17). Feminist theories have criticized research that assume women were objects of other people's movements rather than actors in the world (Wang & Burris, 1994). Feminist theories affect development paradigms and play a significant role in shaping the past, present, and future discourse in critical feminist social movements (Drolet, 2010, p. 212). According to Barlet (1997), feminist theories help to explain global economic restructuring by redefining what is considered as work and identifying the ambiguity of paid and unpaid work, subsistence, market production, and reproductive work. Feminist research values women's work and, knowledge, which has traditionally been undermined and hidden in the private sphere of the home/subsistence economy.

Current debates in feminist theories focus on the lives of women, especially urban and middle-class women (Sachs, 2018). Most feminist movements took place in western countries and urban areas (Sachs, 2018) with less focus on rural areas and developing countries. There is the need for feminist movements in all parts of the world to improve women's decision-making power especially, since women play a major role in agriculture development. According to Marit and Brandth (1994), an important feminist theory question is whether women should focus on their similarities or differences with men; however, currently women intend to do both. Women should enjoy fairness in emerging opportunities in policies and social change. Women need to be empowered to contribute in new sectors of the society, take higher positions, express their ideas and capabilities and prove that men should not always dominate in higher positions in society (Marit & Brandth, 1994). To achieve fair opportunities, gender roles need to be recognised in agriculture. Therefore, scholarly works on women in agriculture have focused on documenting different women's roles and the degree of their contribution in agriculture for the past decades in specific areas (Sachs, 2018). A study conducted by Akram-Lodhi (2013) also suggested that feminist theories have often been split between the recognition of the specific position of women and their integration into an established institutional structure in the United States. Indeed, feminists have realized the important roles women play in the United States towards economic growth and development; hence, there should be strategic efforts to integrate women's decisions into institutional structures or development policies. Akram-Lodhi (2013) stressed that institutions need to be restructured where women are given options to enhance feminization of small-scale agriculture in order to support farmwomen. Rural women are interested to participate in decision-making in developed countries such as Australia in terms of collection of information to enhance their livelihood, workload, household and society (Pannel & Vanclay, 2011).

Women's participation in systematic agricultural decisions is very relevant to the living standard of rural people (Farmar-Bowers, 2010). These decisions can take place at the household or national level. Schutter (2013) contends that agriculture household decision-making is hardly democratic.

Regardless of the efforts by feminists to improve the condition of rural women generally, they have not benefited from the few national policies in the United States geared toward increased access to credit or agriculture training (Sachs, 2018). Feminists have long criticized that women in agriculture are deprived from decision-making opportunities (Sachs, 1983; Jellison, 1993; Neth, 1995; Shiva, 1999 cited in Trauger, 2004). According to Sachs (2018), "some feminists argue that western science and capitalist development strategies devalue women's vast knowledge and experience of the natural world" (p. 5). The modernisation era affected women negatively, since women were not included in development decisions. Kloppenburg (1991) also indicated that, there is the need to replace agriculture science as conventionally practiced with farmer-based knowledge to ensure a system of agriculture sustainability. Kloppenburg (1991) suggested that farmer-based knowledge is the basis for constructing a successor science of sustainable agriculture. Feminist scholars have also suggested that gendered space deprives women of power and knowledge in agriculture (Whatmore, 1991; Spain, 1992; Brandth, 1994, 1995; Duncan, 1996; Leckie, 1996; Little, 1999, 2002, cited in Trauger, 2004). Women are deprived in this regard, since the majority of women farm for subsistence purposes; hence, agriculture has been traditionally regarded as masculine occupation since their male counterparts farm mostly for commercial purposes.

Feminist theories have been criticized for focusing on urban and western women and paying less attention to rural areas in the global south. Feminist thinking, mainly, focuses on

western, white, urban, middleclass women (Basu, 1990; Sach, 2018). Feminist theories and practices focus less on rural women's livelihood; however, rural women influence rural development. Rural women can interact with the natural environment; engage in agriculture activities such as farming and rearing animals. In other words, women have coping strategies to deal with ecological crisis; therefore, there is the need to improve their condition by involving them in the development process. Sachs (2018) highlighted that rural women constitute categories of women that theorists have not completely considered. Sachs implied that feminist theorists have not appreciated the role played by rural women, particularly in developing countries, resulting in less attention on their livelihood. Sachs (2018) argued that both rural women and urban women are different in terms of class, race, ethnicity etc. Rural women are not homogenous and are more disadvantaged than their urban counterparts are. Rural women are deprived in terms of access to resources and opportunities from the government in most developing countries. Sachs suggested that, rural women do not have the same development problems or play the same roles due to cultural and other differences. Rural life in most cases refers to agriculture and farm communities (Sachs, 2018) and rural development implies agriculture or farm development. Ellis and Biggs (2001) stressed that rural development thinking since the 1950s in developing countries focused on "Traditional Farming First", which is a grassroots approach to promote rural development. Ghana is not an exception about this rural development thinking, since most rural development policies throughout the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial eras focused on agriculture development. Therefore, feminist theories not paying attention to rural women means ignoring agriculture or farmwomen's development, which is a challenge to agriculture development in most developing countries.

My research is important since it focuses on rural women in developing countries as they play a vital role in economic growth and development. The feminist movements over four decades focused less on rural women in developing countries like Ghana. In addition, feminist theories in agriculture in the global south are still underdeveloped. Research in agriculture paid less attention to culture in terms of gender, which is one of the factors affecting women's decision-making power in most countries. Culture plays a vital role in women's decision-making power in the household and communities; hence, there is the need to focus on cultural factors to formulate development strategies. In addition, Ghana has developed gender equality principles in its development plans and policies. However, gender equality is difficult to achieve when there is no gender equity in the first place, since gender equity is the road map and the process to achieve gender equality. Therefore, feminist theory in the context of the study focuses on equity and culture in terms of participation in the agricultural decision-making and policymaking in Ghana. The study helps fill the feminist gap by examining the factors hindering women's involvement in the formulation of agriculture policies, household, communities, and agricultural organisations decision-making, and provide recommendations as an addition to the existing literature, useful for any feminist movement in Ghana.

### **2.3. Definition of Key Concepts**

My research discussed some key concepts that are used to analyse the research findings. Key concepts included women's empowerment, gender equity, gender equality and gender mainstreaming.

#### *2.3.1 Women's Empowerment*

The Sustainable Development Goals have incorporated women's empowerment and gender equality as thematic areas to be achieved (Erickson, 2016). Empowering women is an

important concept and essential step to enhance gender equality (Erickson, 2016; Gupta & Yesudian, 2006; Teufel et al., 2019). To understand how, we must first understand what women's empowerment means.

Women's empowerment has been defined and interpreted by many scholars as well as international organisations. According to Erickson (2016), women's empowerment is the ability "of women to gain more power and control over their lives" which includes the notion of women being marginalised as compared to their male counterparts in "economic, socio-cultural and political spheres" (p.10). He further stressed that women's empowerment is a significant process to achieve gender equality where the "rights, responsibilities and opportunities of individuals will not depend on whether they are born male or female" (Erickson, 2016, p 10). Wide gender gaps can be reduced to facilitate gender equality. In this case, women who are marginalised can be empowered by making effective choices, getting access to opportunities, and resources; hence, they will be able to control their livelihood and work with men to solve their development issues.

The World Bank (2007) defined empowerment in terms of where women's capacities are increased and able to make decisions; therefore, transform their decisions into desired actions. Indeed, when women are empowered, they have the ability to make effective decisions that can be transformed into appropriate policy formulation leading to its successful implementation. In relation to agriculture specifically, Meena and Singh (2018) emphasised that when women are empowered, they get the confidence to make decisions regarding production, and participate in marketing of their products; hence, important policies can be designed about their knowledge and can be implemented successfully. The definition by the World Bank helps to explain how active participation in agriculture decision-making can facilitates women's participation in the formulation of policymaking and how these inform desired actions in Ejisu Juaben Municipality.



Kabeer (1999), defined women's empowerment as a "process of change" the process by which women who are marginalised exercise strategic choices get the ability to do so (p. 237). Kabeer (1999), indicated that the ability to make strategies is geared towards three inter-linked dimensions namely, resources (pre-conditions), agency (process) and achievements (outcomes). She explains that resources in this context include human, material and social resources in a more conversational economic sphere geared towards the ability to make strategic choices. The researcher further highlighted that agency tends to be operationalised as decision-making in a form of bargaining and negotiation, deception and manipulation, as well as analysis. The definition also emphasised that resources, decision-making power and outcomes are interlinked; then, they serve as a guide to the study since the study is geared towards human resources; agriculture decision-making and formulation of policies as well as implementation (achievements).

According to Kabeer (2001), empowerment refers to "an expansion in the range of potential choices available to women so that actual outcomes reflect the particular set of choices which the women value" (p.81). Women's empowerment in this context is an increase in the potential choices that are made accessible and valuable to women to yield appropriate outcomes. Women's empowerment is the strategic and energetic process where women attain power and improve their decision-making capabilities (Gupta & Kishor, 2004). The dynamic process gives women the ability to expand their decision-making choices and opportunities that exist in their localities.

The above definitions and interpretations of the concept of women's empowerment are applicable in the study; however, the study particularly follows the definition by the World Bank, which refers to women's empowerment as the process of expanding women's capability to

increase choices and transform them into appropriate actions towards a desired outcome (World Bank, 2007). This definition is most suitable for the study because the definition key terms include increasing choices (decision-making power), actions (policy formulation) and outcomes (achievements or successful implementation), which are the integral components of my research to examine the participation of women in the formulation of agriculture policies. With respect to this definition, women's empowerment in the context of the study is the process where women get the ability to increase their decision-making power which can inform their involvement in policymaking to ensure a successful implementation of the policies to improve women's livelihood. Women's empowerment is an important concept since participation of women in agriculture policymaking can enable women to contribute solutions to agriculture problems for themselves.

### *2.3.2 Gender Equality and Gender Equity*

The foundation of the study rests on the definition of gender equality and equity as concepts. However, there is the need to understand the meaning of gender to better interpret gender equality and gender equity concepts. According to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO, 2003), gender refers to men and women in respect to their roles and responsibilities assigned to them in the families, societies and culture, including femininity and masculinity. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations defined gender as the perceptual and material relationship between man and woman, and how both of them are socially constructed. Gender is not determined by biological sex characteristics of an individual but by the roles and responsibilities society associates with sex. There is a misunderstanding of the meaning of gender as only relating to women; however, the definition by both FAO and UNESCO is attributed to both men and women. The study follows the

definition by UNESCO, which explains gender in relation to both men's and women's roles and responsibilities. Gender equality and gender equity can better be interpreted and explained based on the above definition of gender in relation to men's and women's roles and responsibilities in agriculture.

Gender equality is a concept that is interlinked to gender equity, gender mainstreaming and empowerment. The United Nations (2002) emphasised that gender equality is a goal and a basic human right that the state and international organisations acknowledge. Gender equality is an internationally agreed concept, since 1979 to achieve the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and to attain the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015 (Sida, 2016). International organisations such as the Food and Agriculture Organisation also use gender equality as a tool to achieve food security with two mechanisms including increased agriculture productivity and improved livelihood of rural inhabitants (United Nations, 2002). The livelihood of rural inhabitants can be improved when the gender gap that exists in agriculture decision-making and the formulation of policies is narrowed. There are different definitions of gender equality used by scholars and international organisations.

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD, (2011), gender equality means equal enjoyment in terms of opportunities, resources, and life chances by men and women. Similarly, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, UNFPA (2002) defined gender equality as a society where there is equal opportunity, outcomes, rights and opportunities for men and women in all aspects of life. Council of Europe (2004) also defined gender equality as the same empowerment, involvement and visibility of men and women in all aspects of their lives. The Council further stressed that gender equality is essential to enhance active participation of gender in a locality. There is the need to understand that men

and women have different livelihood conditions and these conditions should not affect decision-making power and participation by gender. The International Fund for Agriculture Development, IFAD (2012) defined gender equality in a different way as the existence of equal accessibility to opportunities, control over resources, and decision-making power at all levels. IFAD (2012) further stressed that higher gender equality facilitates greater economic growth and a good standard of living. Therefore, gender equality in terms of decision-making and participation in the formulation of agriculture policies will increase economic growth and improve the livelihood of women marginalised in their societies. From the above definition of gender equality, the study employs the definition by the IFAD since its definition entails equal decision-making power, control over resources and accessibility.

Having understood the meaning of gender equality, gender equity is an important component of the study because gender equity is a means to achieve gender equality (CID, 2012). Indeed, gender equity is the means and equality is the result (UNESCO, 2003). Gender equity also facilitates the achievement of sustainable development (CID, 2012). Additionally, the concept will enhance the fairness in decision-making power, policymaking and narrow the gender gap; therefore, both men and women will get fair accessibility to agriculture productive resources and improve their livelihood. Gender equity is defined by many international organisations, but there is a common key term of “fairness” that runs through most of the definitions. According to UNESCO (2003), gender equity is a process where there is fairness to both men and women in relation to their social disadvantages that hinder their prosperity. Similarly, Council for International Development (CID, 2012) defined gender equity as the treatment given to men and women based on their respective needs to promote equal rights, roles and opportunities. CID further stressed that development practitioners take a variety of actions

accordingly, since individuals live with distinct weaknesses and strengths in the context of this definition. The study employs the definition by CID. Fairness in the rights, roles and opportunities will facilitate active participation of women in agriculture decision-making in their society and the formulation of agriculture policies. As a result of inadequate financial resources in developing countries, gender equity is an important concept to focus on in attempting to develop the agricultural sector and reduce food insecurity in Ghana.

Some feminists argue that gender equity is more desirable than equality (UNDP, 2005). Men and women are not necessarily striving for the same thing but striving for fairness. My research emphasis particularly on gender equity since it is a means to achieve gender equality. In other words, gender equity is an objective, whereas gender equality is a goal. Hence, when the objective is attained, the goal is achieved in the long run. The research highlights more on gender equity in terms of agriculture resources and participation in policymaking at the municipal level in Ghana.

### *2.3.3 Gender Mainstreaming*

Gender mainstreaming is also interlinked to gender equality; therefore, gender mainstreaming is a process, and gender equality is a goal (United Nations, 2012). Gender mainstreaming is “the process of assessing the implications for women’s and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels” (ECOSOC Agreed Conclusions 1997/2). Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) further emphasised that gender mainstreaming is the strategy that integrates women and men issues in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes, which enables men and women to enjoy equal advantages with the aim of achieving gender equality. Alston (2014) also defined gender mainstreaming as the process that integrates gender perspectives into action to

address all gender issues. Gender mainstreaming is again a process that attempts to advance gender equality by integrating gender as a focal point of all mainstream policy areas (Rees, 2005; Walby, 2005). Gender mainstreaming from these two definitions can be interpreted as the integration of gender issues, such as greater gender gap in accessing production resources, unequal decision-making power and so on into the formulation of policies. Squires (2005) stressed that feminist scholars highlight gender mainstreaming as equality of opportunity involving a strategy of inclusion and outcomes. Gender mainstreaming is an important concept in the study because most national policy frameworks, including agriculture policies in Ghana, include gender mainstreaming as a strategy to enhance gender equality, at least theoretically. However, we do not know how well gender mainstreaming is implemented in Ghana. Importantly, gender mainstreaming facilitates equity in resource distribution and allocation with the aim of achieving gender equality in the long run.

The three concepts of gender equality, gender equity and gender mainstreaming are interlinked, and very important concepts integrated in most national policy framework and plans including agriculture policies in Ghana. The integration of these concepts is due to the high gender gap in resource allocation and distribution where women are marginalised; therefore, gender mainstreaming and gender equity are mostly integrated in policies; where gender equality constitutes a fundamental goal to be achieved in the process of implementing national policies. The research stresses particularly on gender mainstreaming and gender equity to analyse the findings to have clear picture of how gender mainstreaming can help achieve equity in agriculture resource allocation and distribution, decision-making and policymaking in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality.

## **2.4. Women Participation in Agricultural Decision-Making in Ghana**

The participation of women in household decision-making could facilitate their capabilities to transform their ideas into action plans. Women are empowered in their homes when they make equitable decisions with their spouses (Seymour & Peterman, 2018); hence, they are able to contribute effectively in other decision-making grounds, such as in their communities and agriculture organisations, in their localities. Importantly, gender equity in household' decisions could promote gender equality in other areas of decision-making at the local or national level in the long run.

Women's participation in household decision-making in the agricultural sector is very low compared to their male counterparts. Household decisions-makings includes sale of productive assets such as farmland, animals, farm equipment, among others in Northern Ghana (Ragsdale et al., 2018). Additionally, Ragsdale and colleagues (2018) highlighted that solely men make most of the decision-makings in the households. On the other hand, a small number of women make decisions solely and, in some cases, jointly with their male counterparts. Joint decisions happened in the households due to inadequate resources; both men and women need to make decisions to share the available resources (Seymour & Peterman, 2018). For instance, there were 94.8 percent of agricultural land owned solely by men, 5.2 percent were owned solely by women, and less than 1 percent were jointly owned by both men and women in Ghana (Oduro, & Adamtey, 2017). Therefore, women need to discuss with their male counterparts, mostly their spouses, to share land since most women do not have access to land. Additionally, women have less access to adequate inputs into food crop farming and cash crop farming decisions (Seymour & Peterman, 2018); nevertheless, they need to make decision with men to get access to inputs. The findings from the researchers imply that many women do not participate in household decision-makings, since a small number of women make agriculture decision alone or with their

male counterparts. The main factor identified by the researchers is a culture that expects men to make decisions for the entire household, and the directives of men control women.

Seymour and Peterman (2018) stressed that women's participation in intrahousehold decision-making is mostly used as a basis of empowerment. Women's participation in household's decision-making can inform their involvement in decision-making in their communities and other decision-making grounds, since women can build some confidence when they participate actively in household decisions. An ethnographic research by Quaye et al. (2016) confirmed that decision-making in communities including access to production assets is influenced by household decision-making. The researcher explained that, when women from both Muslim and non-Muslim households participate actively in their household decision-making, they get more confident to engage actively in community decision-making to access productive resources.

Quaye and colleagues (2016) indicated men participate more than women in decision-making related to productive assets such as land, credit, extension services and technology for production in their communities in Ghana. A baseline survey of 675 participants (both male and female) by Ragsdale et al. (2018), indicated that, the majority of women do not participate in decision-making in their communities in the three districts in Northern region of Ghana. Ragsdale et al. (2018) stressed that women are not empowered to be involved in decision-making in their communities due to a lack of access to productive resources, but their male counterparts have more accessibility to resources.

The kind of crops women choose to cultivate influences their participation in the decision-making process. Particularly, women are mainly food producers whilst their male counterparts are engaged in cash and food crops (Doss, 2002). For this reason, most women produced for



subsistence purposes, but not mainly for commercial purposes due to the lack of access to adequate resources. Hence, women are not empowered to participate in decision-making in their communities, since they are not recognised with regards to contributing to agriculture development. Culture is another factor hindering women's participation in decision-making in their communities in Ghana. According to Quaye et al. (2016), in Islamic communities in Ghana, decision-making is done solely by men because of cultural and religious factors. The researchers explained that women in non- Islamic communities participate more in decision-making and expressed their ideas more often than women in Islamic communities. Nevertheless, there were more joint decision-making experienced in most non-Islamic communities in Ghana. The scholars stressed that women in Islamic communities respect their husbands and allow the spouses to represent the households in community meetings. Also, other factors identified by Quaye et al., (2016) with respect to women not being able to participate in decision-making in their communities include low level of education, low level of confidence, low economic status, and social and political power experienced by women in Ghana. In this study, there was a high gender gap of 80 percent for females as compared to males with regards to access to credit and land (Quaye et al., 2016). Ragsdale et al, (2018) also identified that workload prevented both women and men to participate in decision-making actively in Ghana. According to the scholars, 80 percent of the participants are not empowered through this indicator; however, the researchers did not specify the percentage of women who are not empowered due to high workload. Women's involvement in decision-making at the grassroots level such as community, FBOs and household level can inform their involvement in policymaking in Ghana. To enhance women's empowerment in relation to decision-making, women's preferences in decision-making must match how decision-making is made (Seymour & Peterman, 2018).

A study conducted in some developing countries such as India, shows that the participation of women in agriculture decision-making was very low in these regions (Ashwini et al., 2018 & Susheela et al., 1991). For instance, an exploratory and descriptive research conducted by Ashwini et al. (2018) in Shikaripura Taluk of Shivamogga district in the state of Karnataka of India, showed that 55 percent of women do not participate in the decision-making process; however, 24.44 percent and 20 percent participate actively and partially respectively. The researchers further explained that, women participate partially in decision-making since they take part in certain aspects of discussions. Again, research conducted by Susheela et al. (1991) highlighted that rural women participate less in the household decisions pertaining to the purchase of agriculture inputs; however, the women were actively involved in livestock decision-making in India. The participation of women in decision-making processes is generally low in India. On the contrary, a study in Uganda suggested that both men and women have little difference in terms of the level of participation in agriculture decision-making such as the type of crop to plant, the type of inputs to use, etc. (Twyman & Deere, 2015). In Ethiopia, a 177-households survey conducted by Tiruneh et al. (2001) indicated that female-headed households make decisions alone concerning adopting new varieties of wheat; however, some decisions in some cases include their sons. Tiruneh et al. (2001) nevertheless did not stress the type of cases where decision-making included both women and a son as well as the factors that enabled female-headed households to make decisions alone. Therefore, a more in-depth qualitative research is needed to answer these types of questions.

Among the factors hindering women's active participation in decision-making emphasised by Ashwini and colleagues (2018) are insufficient access to mass media, a lack of access to extension services, insufficient time, illiteracy, and large family size of households. Women have

low participation in decision-making due to fewer leadership positions for women in the political spheres, especially in Ghana and other developing countries. There is little literature on the factors hindering women's participation in agricultural decision-making in Ghana; hence, this study examines the factors affecting the participation of women in agricultural decision-making in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality in Ghana and how it can impact the women's participation in policymaking. Women contribute significantly to the agricultural sector, and any decision regarding agriculture should include women's knowledge and ideas to enhance successful implementation of those decisions.

#### *2.4.1 Gender Participation and Formulation of Farmer-Based Organisations in Ghana*

The formulation of FBOs is a channel through which the government can interact effectively with farmers and discuss development issues hindering farmers' production. They are organizations through which men and women can contribute to the formulation of agriculture policies at the national level. Decisions made at the local level through the organisations can be presented to stakeholders like the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA) to channel to the national authorities for policymaking for agriculture development in Ghana. Therefore, the approach will facilitate effective participation of the farmers in agriculture policy formulation. Asante et al. (2011) stressed that FBOs currently promote the ideas of their members in various media on policymaking and play a vital role in local planning and agriculture development. For these reasons, the MOFA in Ghana has embarked on strategies over the years to promote FBOs at the local level and register those organisations at the local, district or regional levels (Asante et al., 2011). According to Salifu et al. (2010), there are about 10,000 local FBOs in Ghana consisting of approximately 350,000 farmers in 2010. These organisations enable farmers to organise themselves (self-help groups) to access productive resources such as land and capital

and help narrow gender gaps in relation to access to productive resources where women are marginalised in most cases. Therefore, there is the need to understand the impact of FBOs to facilitate women's involvement in agriculture decision-making and policymaking.

FBOs refer to the grouping of farmers based on their common interest in areas such as production, processing, storage, and marketing crops as well as gather resources together, and promoting access to farm resources (Salifu & Funk, 2012). The common interest lends credibility to farmers to bargain for power, access cheap effective extension services delivery, and empower members, which facilitates policies to improve the livelihood of individuals (Salifu et al., 2010). There are little literatures on FBOs in Ghana and the available literature focus less on women. Again, there is little research in other countries, which concentrates on women in FBOs or farmer groups. The lack of relevant literature justifies the need for my research focusing on rural women in Ghana since they play a vital role in agriculture development in Ghana.

Despite the lack of more agriculture research literature in Ghana pertaining to women, there is a body of literature that examines the existence of farmer groups generally. Research conducted by Asante et al. (2011) aimed to identify the factors that determine farmers' willingness to join FBOs in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The researchers highlighted 39 FBOs and focused on 20; however, they did not categorise the organisations based on gender. In other words, the researchers did not specify the number of organisations, which are mainly men, mainly women or joint. Grouping the organisations will help provide informative analysis. On the contrary, research conducted by Salifu et al. (2012) sorted FBOs into men only, women only, and joint groupings. Asante et al. (2011) particularly emphasised on determining the factors that enable farmers to join FBOs and assumed that more men are likely to join than their female counterparts are.

The researchers concluded that one factor that determines farmers' ability to join FBOs is farmers' farm size. They explained that when a farmer's farm size increases by one acre, there is a corresponding chance of the farmer joining FBOs by 40.4 percent (Asante et al., 2011). They further stressed that when farmers get the opportunity to increase farm size, they may need financial support to buy more inputs to increase production; hence, farmers decide to join FBOs to get access to funds. Adimado (2001); and Kheralla et al. (2001) also claimed that there is a relationship between large farm size and willingness to join FBOs. It can be argued that women are mostly not part of FBOs in the region even though the researchers did not stress that. Research suggests that women are more marginalised in terms of access to large farm size due to cultural and political reasons. It is hard to determine whether men faced the same situation in the region, as it was not highlighted in the previous analysis. The other factor that encourages farmers to join FBOs is access to credit and machinery; where farmers are likely to join the organisations by 96.7 percent when their access to machinery services increases (Asante et al., 2011). FBOs help farmers to get collateral to access machinery and capital that are made available to them in their communities for higher production. Furthermore, the researchers stressed that farmers' income is a factor that enable farmers to join FBOs. Meena and Singh (2018) also identified income as a factor hindering farmers from joining farm groups in India. Asante et al. (2011) explained that when farmers' income is increased by one Ghana cedi, the likelihood of farmers joining FBOs increases by 0.026 percent. Farmers with increased or high income will be more willing to join FBOs since they can pay all financial contributions such as dues.

Research on gender in agricultural decision-making is lacking in Ghana, but there are studies from other countries that will serve as comparison. For instance, Asante et al. (2011) did

not highlight the participation level of gender with respect to decision-making in FBOs in Ghana. However, a research conducted by Salifu et al. (2012) indicated that four-out-of-24 FBOs studied in Ghana were female only. The researchers further explained that leaders of the four groups were mostly men due to low level educational of most women who were not able to read and write. In addition, Raišienė et al. (2018) contended that 10 percent of farmers in Lithuania participated in FBOs and about 85 percent do not belong to any organization. The researchers explained that those women who have intention to participate actively are highly educated and middle aged farmers and men; women due to other responsibilities, (domestic and economic roles), may not have as much interest to participate as their male counterparts. Education has a great impact on active participation of rural women in FBOs. Meena and Singh (2018) confirmed that a lack of group membership is the main factor of women's disempowerment in agriculture in India. They explained that when farmers belong to group organizations, they could get collateral security to access credit opportunities to increase their production. Meena and Singh (2018) further contended that the lack of access to land hinders women, specially, to join FBOs in India. Similarly, lack of access to land hinders farmers to join farm groups in Malawi (Matchaya, 2010). The researchers also identified that high workload is a factor that does not enable women particularly to join FBOs. Again, the scholars emphasised that too much of women's workload, including domestic and economic roles in the household, prevent women from joining FBOs.

The above literature identified factors such as workload, access to credit, access to farm machinery, increased access to land and farm size as the factors that hinder farmers' decision to join FBOs. Women are more marginalised than their male counterparts are as they lack access to the above productive resources as empirical research shows. There is little literature on gender composition of FBOs in Ghana currently, but the study will examine whether women

interviewed are part of FBOs or not, willing to join or not. These findings will help to explain how FBOs influences female farmers' decision-making power and policymaking in their locality. As Peterson (1999) stressed, FBO serve as a medium for participation, which increases advocacy for participation.

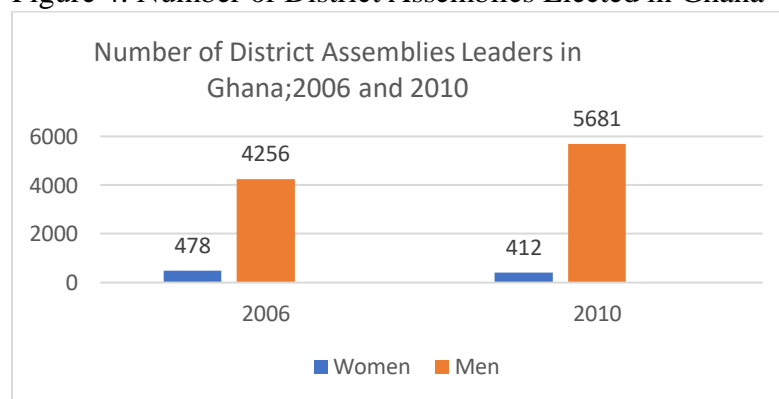
## **2.5 Women Participation in Local Government or Municipal/District Assemblies in Ghana**

Tagoe and Abakah (2015) stressed that the District Assembly concept was formulated in 1987 to ensure that decision-making move from the national to the grassroots level. The District or Municipal Assemblies are the highest administrative bodies at the local level of governance in Ghana as part of the decentralization process (Baah-Elunumh et al., 2005 & Boateng et al., 2015). The researchers explained that the Municipal Assemblies are responsible for the overall growth of the municipality; hence, they are responsible to provide services, facilitate democracy, development as the grassroots levels. Tagoe and Abakah, (2015) further indicated that the district assemblies serve as a channel through which women can participate in decision-making at the national level. Therefore, the municipal or district assemblies need to ensure higher and equitable participation of local people in the communities (Government of Ghana, 2002). Ghana is a democratic country, but it has a high gender gap in local governance especially in leadership and decision-making by citizens. Precisely, women have the right to be actively and equitably involved in decision-making or the local governance process since they are Ghanaians and are part of local communities' members (Baah-Ennumh et al., 2005).

According to Duncan (2004), women are under-represented at the national level of governance. Indeed, there should be equity in gender composition at the national level to enhance gender equity in decision-making or policy formulation. Duncan (2004) stipulated that women make up 29 percent of Ministers and 22 percent of Deputy Ministers. Most men are

represented in parliament to make decisions and formulate national policies including agriculture policies. Women participate less in decision-making at the national level. Women constitute 8.2 percent of the Municipal and District Chief Executive members at the local government level (Duncun, 2004). Yet there has been improvement in the number of women who aspire for District Assemblies elections in 1994 but declined from 2006 to 2010 as emphasised by Duncun (2004). Most rural areas in Ghana comprise a significant number of women, governed by district assemblies, but the number of female leaders appointed or elected are fewer as compared to men (shown in figure 4).

Figure 4: Number of District Assemblies Elected in Ghana



*Source: Adapted from Tagoe & Abakah (2015)*

The figure depicts that the number of women elected as district assemblies' leaders reduced in 2010.

Other kinds of literature from academic scholars (Baah-Ennumh et al., 2005; Bauer & Britton, 2006; Boateng et al, 2015 Duncan, 2004; Ofei-Aboagye, 2015; Tagoe & Abakah, 2015, Owusu, & Kokor, 2005; GSS, 2012; Tsikata, 2009 and Yobo, 2012a) indicated that there are few women leaders elected at the district or municipal assemblies in Ghana. Female leaders at the Municipal Assembly can influence the participation level of women at the grassroots level.



The factors identified by the scholars regarding low women's participation in leadership positions are patriarchal culture, a lack of confidence, financial constraints, domestic roles, and education. Precisely, Tagoe and Abakah (2015) contended illiterate women do not participate actively in decision-making since they do not have the confidence to voice their ideas in male-dominated discussions in most cases. Baah Ennumh et al. (2005) and Offei-Boateng et al. (2000) also emphasized women do not have adequate resources to contest for leadership positions. Again, women's workload in domestic roles and other duties influences how much time they have to participate in those elections. The scholars highlighted that culture dynamics in Ghanaian societies disempower women from taking leadership positions since men are preferred to be heads or leaders in any organization.

The concerns raised by researchers (Baah-Ennumh et al., 2005; Bauer & Britton, 2006; Boateng et al, 2015 Duncan, 2004; Ofei-Aboagye, 2015; Tagoe & Abakah, 2015, Owusu, & Kokor, 2005; GSS, 2012; Tsikata, 2009 and Yobo, 2012a), with regards to women's participation does not reflect my concerns. The scholars focused on women taking a higher position and participating actively in local governance; however, I am concerned with the involvement of the local people specifically farmers in the decision-making process by the government (local and national). The scholars focus on women generally however, I am focusing on female farmers. Therefore, my research is important to address some research gap to enhance agriculture development in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality.

## **2.6 Current Agriculture Policies in Ghana**

The Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA) is the organisation responsible for the development of the agricultural sector in Ghana within the context of a harmonised government programme. The organisation is mandated to undertake the functions, plans and programmes that

are harmonised through policy and strategic frameworks and facilitate the formulation of the FASDEP II (MOFA, 2010). According to the MOFA (2007), the FASDEP was a holistic policy formulated in 2002 as a framework for implementing strategies to modernise the agricultural sector and to strengthen the growth of the private sector. The policy was formulated by the government of Ghana to facilitate agricultural sectors' development and interventions. Through a consultation process and lessons learnt from FASDEP I, the policy was further revised to FASDEP II in 2007, to focus on the sustainable use of all productive resources and commercialisation of activities in the agricultural sector geared towards market-driven growth. The objectives of the framework according to MOFA (2007) are to “promote food security and emergency preparedness; improved growth in incomes; increased competitiveness and enhanced integration into domestic and international markets” (p. 22). Additionally, the framework seeks to ensure “sustainable management of land and environment; promote science and technology applied in food and agriculture development; and improve institutional coordination” (MOFA, 2007, p. 22). These objectives, when achieved will promote the agricultural sector, reduce poverty, enhance food security, and improve the living standard of citizens in Ghana.

MOFA (2007) further stressed that one of the broad principles of the policy is to ensure all sub-policies and programmes are formulated from a gender perspective to enhance the government's gender equality in the agricultural sector. In most cases, this principle is implementable in theory but not successfully implemented in practice. For instance, the national development policy framework, which integrated women in the development process, has not been successfully implemented in Ghana. The Vision 2020 was an economic development policy framework launched during Rawlings (president of Ghana) regime and only the first step of the policy (1996-2000) was launched (Government of Ghana, 1996). This policy had good strategies

to integrate women in the development process by capitalising on women's roles in development; hence, formulating policies based on gender perspectives. The policy was not successfully implemented due to political instability in Ghana resulting in the abandoning of the policy framework. Effective policy implementation requires government commitment and active participation of stakeholders (farmers about agriculture policies). The study will, therefore, examine whether policy designed for MOFA for implementation is gender-inclusive particularly of women. According to the policy document, crop-sector development policy and livestock development policy are the policies designed specifically for MOFA to implement.

## **2.7 Conceptual Framework**

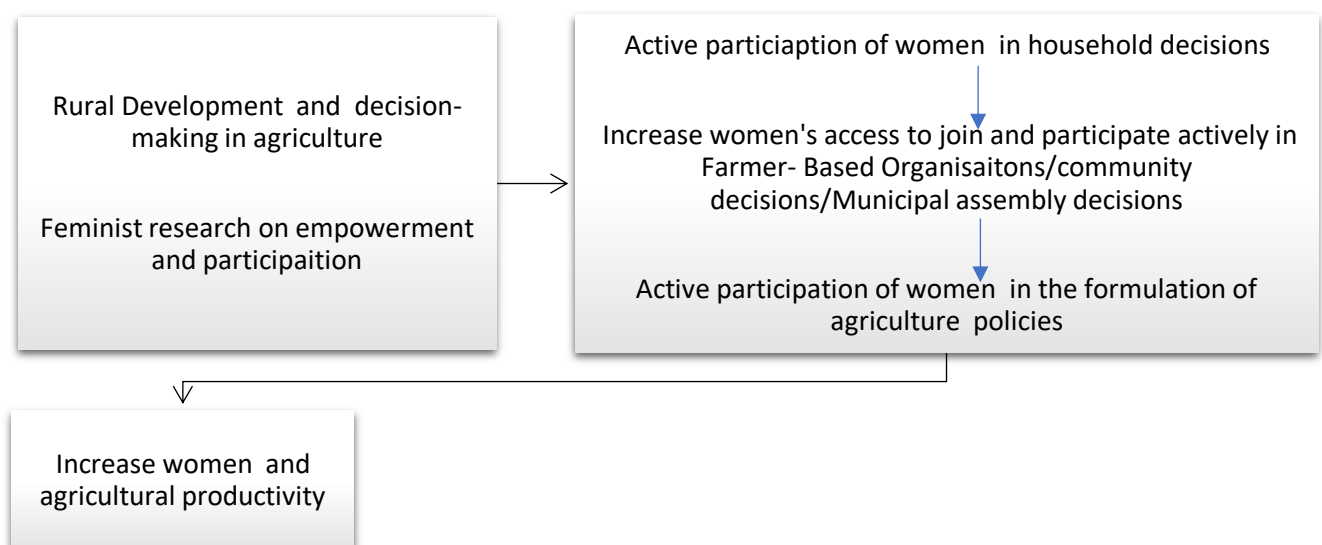
My thesis research draws together research on FBOs and feminist perspectives on gender and development. Based on my literature review, most women do not have access to join FBOs due to factors such as high workload, lack of education, and lack of access to resources. Women in some cases do not get the opportunity to partake in household and community decisions in Ghana, which is mostly due to cultural factors. Generally, women have low participation in agricultural decision-making in their households, communities, and FBOs in Ghana.

Additionally, with access, women are encouraged to join and participate actively in decision-making in FBOs in their localities. Farmer groups are an easier media through which the government can communicate with the community members (farmers). FBOs can enhance women's involvement in the formulation of agriculture policies in the municipality. Furthermore, women can be encouraged through training and education as well as through feminist movements; hence, they can facilitate their decision-making power in their localities and their ability to participate actively in agriculture policymaking in Ghana. However, feminist movements focused less on rural women and their cultures as well as areas in developing

countries like Ghana. The culture in rural areas in Ghana influences active participation of women in decision-making and policymaking.

Conceptually, when there are feminist movements or research in rural areas regarding agricultural decision-making, feminists can make an effort to ensure gender equity in the participation in agricultural decision-making and policy formulation. These movements can empower women with opportunities to participate in all forms of decisions in the household, community, FBOs, municipal, and national decisions (policymaking). Additionally, rural development and decision-making in agriculture by policy makers need to ensure active participation of women in this regard. Women's active participation in regional decision-making and policymaking can be influenced by women's active participation in household decision-making as well as FBOs. Successful implementation of policies and decisions can be achieved when there is active participation of beneficiaries such as women. In the long run, active participation of women in agricultural decisions can promote women's and agricultural productivity.

Figure 5: Conceptual Framework



Source: Nyankson (author), 2020

## **Chapter Three**

### **Research Design and Methods**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

Parahoo (1997) referred to research design as a strategy adopted to explain how, when and where data are to be gathered and analyzed. Research design links the conceptual or theoretical aspects of research to how research is conducted. The research design for this study is influenced by a feminist perspective on women's participation in agriculture policymaking, which suggests equity in participation in the decision-making and policymaking process. This chapter introduces the methods of inquiry to examine how women were involved in the formulation of the current agriculture policy in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality. The methods outlined in this chapter provide the means to answer the research questions introduced in chapter one.

#### **3.2 Research Approach**

The research approach, according to Creswell (2014) is the “plans and the procedures for research that span the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis and interpretation” (p. 1). Creswell highlighted three types of research approaches namely qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. In this project, qualitative methods were employed. Qualitative research methods helped me deal with the study of social phenomena from the participants' point of view (William, 2007). William stressed that a qualitative research approach allows for flexibility in data collection, which enables the researcher to interpret findings more naturally. This method enabled me to establish credibility and rigour by collecting rich and detailed first-hand accounts of women's decision-making at home, in community, in FBOs and in the Municipal Assembly (Creswell, 1994).

Specifically, I employed a qualitative case study approach. A case study is “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context especially when the boundaries within phenomenon and the contexts are not clearly evident” (Yin, 2009, p.18). A case study research design is very relevant for my research due to the complexity and dynamism of the phenomenon being studied. Women’s participation and decision-making in agriculture has many dimensions and the case study method assists with examining those different dimensions and patterns across different settings to enhance our understanding of special situations surrounding a case investigated (Kumekpor, 2002).

This study paradigm is useful in examining women’s participation in the formulation of agriculture policies in Ghana. To study the entire country is very complex and very time consuming to come to accurate findings; however, focusing on a municipality within Ghana to study a phenomenon can adequately represent the situations within that smaller scope and smaller sample. A case study was adopted by Baxter and Rideout (2006) to assess decisions made by nursing students and the factors affecting their decision-making. Baxter explained that case study research enabled detailed understanding of decision-making made by the nursing students in the context it happened. On the contrary, the limitation of case study research is the fact that it is difficult to generalize findings, since the research design does not provide enough grounds for generalization (Soy, 1997). However, Baxter and Rideout (2016) emphasized that generalization can be made from case study research when the study is “designed appropriately and the analysis is attentive to the tension between concrete and abstract concepts” (p.142). My project is a case of a selected number of people to provide credible explanations of the phenomenon studied among the group, and the findings can be transferrable to other researchers. Hay (2016) also argued that quantitative researchers are more focused on generalization, thus

“the more cases the theory applies to, the better.” However, qualitative researchers are much more focused on the fact that “explanations of the phenomenon as manifest in the case are credible” (Hay, 2016, p. 4) and the findings of a case are transferable to other cases of the phenomenon in question. The cases studied pay attention to detail and context; hence, findings and factors explored can have theoretical relevance to other cases. Since my project’s goal is to study in some depth and have a clear picture of the phenomenon in a natural setting, qualitative case study was appropriate for the project.

### **3.3 Type and Sources of Data**

My thesis research made use of both secondary and primary data. Secondary data was collected from Ghana Statistical Service reports, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture websites and annual reports as well as municipal reports. Most of the information from secondary sources were related to agriculture in Ghana and some from developing countries. Additionally, I reviewed literature from journal articles and books. This secondary information provided a background information of the phenomenon under study; I had a clear picture of how women are involved in agriculture decision-making in general in other jurisdictions around the world. The primary data were sought through interviews with women in agriculture households in three selected rural communities and agriculture stakeholders in the municipality.

### **3.4 Selection of Study Area**

The area under study was Ejisu-Juaben Municipality, which is one of the 27 administrative and political districts in Ghana. The municipality is located in the central part of Ashanti Region, sharing boundaries with six districts: Kumasi Metropolitan, Kwabre East, Sekyere South, Asante Akim north, Asante Akim South and Bosomtwe-Kwanwoma Districts.

According to the 2010 Population and Housing Census, the municipality's population is 143,762 constituting 68,648 (47.8 percent) males and 75,114 (52.2 percent) females, where 72 percent of the population lives in rural areas while 27.5 percent lives in urban areas (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). The municipality comprises about 15,549 agricultural households, where 56.5 percent of households are in rural areas whereas 23.9 percent are in urban areas (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). Approximately 96.8 percent of farmers are engaged in crop farming, 19.5 percent are engaged in livestock farming, and 0.4 percent are engaged in tree planting in the municipality (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). Based on the above information, Ejisu-Juaben Municipality was purposely selected, since it is a farming municipality comprising of many rural areas, engaged in agriculture production, mainly crop production. Although 52.2 percent on inhabitants in the municipality are women, there is a lack of disaggregated sex data in terms of production in the municipality where the Ministry of Food and Agriculture has not published data on agriculture activity for both men and women in the municipality. With respect to this fact, the municipality is an important area to examine how women's roles in agriculture production are recognized, since there is no published data on their output; or knowledge of how their outputs influence their participation in the formulation of agriculture policies such as crop development policy and other sub policies.

### **3.5 Research Ethics Approval**

Prior to data collection, I obtained ethics approval from Brandon University Research Ethics Committee (BUREC). BUREC application forms were filled and submitted together with the interview guides, recruitment letter, and informed consent letters designed for the research. The informed consent letter explained the risks, the benefits, research procedure, participants' responsibilities, and duration of the research, among others. Approval was obtained from



traditional/community authorities (chiefs), households and government authorities involved in the project. The participants had the right to withdraw from participating at any time, even after the data had been collected before February 2019.

### *3.5.1 Obtaining Community Approval*

First, I recruited key informants from the Municipal Assembly (agriculture stakeholders). Based on my research experience, the head of any institution needs to approve a proposed project before any member of the institution can be consulted. Therefore, I sought approval from the director of the department of agriculture through personal contact and discussed the proposed research briefly before proceeding to the recruitment process. An informed consent form was presented to the director to read and sign when he was satisfied with the information. Once approved, I moved on to the recruitment process of key informants.

Simultaneously, I consulted some traditional authorities in the nearest communities closer to the Municipal Assembly for approval of my research, and to seek permission to interview female farmers from those communities. I consulted other communities in the municipality for the subsequent period. I used Google Maps to locate these communities in the municipality and where the palaces (place where the chief stays) were located.

All the traditional authorities I consulted in the selected communities approved my project. Consulting traditional authorities is referred to as a community entry technique that enables the researcher to get more support from the communities under study. As custom demands, any researcher in any community or location needs to first meet the authorities to discuss the proposed project before recruiting participants with the aim of obtaining approval from the leaders, once they are satisfied with the proposed project (Tindana et al., 2006).

Tindana et al. (2006) emphasized that it is relevant to consult the leaders, especially traditional

authorities, first since they are caretakers and need to know anything that happens in their society; therefore, they need to be consulted first before the research can be undertaken in the community. In addition, as a research assistant at the Bureau of Integrated Rural Development, I experienced that research cannot be carried in any community in Ghana without appropriate community entry. The use of appropriate community entry facilitated active community support for my proposed project. I discussed the proposed project, including information on the informed consent form, in a local language (national language) to the traditional authorities in respective communities. Local language was used to communicate with traditional leaders due to a lack of higher education and to enable them to clearly understand the details of the project. Following that, I asked if they were satisfied or not with the information. Once they were satisfied, I asked for written consent by requesting a leader in respective communities to sign or thumbprint on the consent form. The consent form was approved, and I moved on with the recruitment of female farmers in the communities.

### **3.6 Method of Data Collection and Sampling Technique**

Face-to face interviews with women farmers and key informants were used to collect in-depth understandings of women's experiences in women's decision-making across different settings. Interviews are defined as a "face-to-face verbal interchange in which one person, the interviewer, attempts to elicit information or expressions of opinion or belief from another person or persons" (Maccoby & Maccoby 1954, p. 499). An interview was most appropriate for my project because, according to Hay (2016), interviews provide an understanding of the diversity of opinions or debates and experiences among a group or individuals. Interviews helped me to discover what is important to the informant and allowed me to ask in-depth questions to explore how women were involved in the formulation of agriculture policies in the municipality

as well as how and why they have not been involved. The interviews provided me flexibility where I was able to reframe some questions to minimize risks as well as probe to learn more from the participant.

Two semi-structured interview guides, one for female farmers and the other guide for key informants were used to elicit consistent data from 19 participants (12 female and 7 key informants) in Ejisu- Juaben Municipality. My research made use of semi-structured interviews because these provide “some degree of predetermined order but maintains flexibility in the way issues are addressed by the informant” (Hay, 2016, p. 150). Semi-structured interviews allowed questions to be reframed, and for the introduction of unanticipated comments from participants. Hay (2016) further explained that questions in semi-structured interviews deal with content and concerns, which are judged by me as important to the research questions; hence, I was able to redirect the discussion that has switched from the topic.

Purposive sampling was used to recruit participants of my project. Purposive sampling technique was used to recruit farmwomen and agriculture stakeholders in municipality. Harrison (2001) emphasized that purposive sampling allows a researcher to hand- pick samples who possess characteristics or properties. This type of sampling is most appropriate for my project because the sample I used possessed specific characteristics of participants, which enabled me to examine how women (under a specific category) in Ejisu-Juaben municipality were involved in the formulation of agriculture policies. Participants in this regard were female farmers and agriculture stakeholders in the municipality. Kothari (2004) also highlighted that purposive sampling is most appropriate when the research environment happens to be in small setting where a known feature of it needs to be intensively examined. Therefore, purposive sampling enabled me to examine how a known characteristic of people such as agriculture stakeholders

and female farmers in the Ejisu-Juaben Municipality were involved in the formulation of the FASDEP II.

### *3.6.1 Interview with Key Informants*

The research began with key informant interviews. According to Powers et.al (2011), key informants are individuals who have firsthand or specialised and in-depth knowledge of the municipality and dynamics I wish to study. I started with key informant to develop local knowledge prior to in-depth interviews with the farmwomen. Again, the key informant interviews enabled me to compare as well as contrast the perspectives of those responsible for policy and resources of women with farmwomen's knowledge.

The key informants were agriculture stakeholders including both men and women; however, there were more male participants than the females. There were four men and three women interviewed. I interviewed men since they are part of the leaders to enhance the welfare of women in the agricultural sector. The stakeholders interviewed were 40 years of age and above and have worked in the agricultural sector in the municipality for more than 12 years.

With respect to the interview process, an informed consent form was present to the leader of the organisation. Once approved, I asked for the meeting dates of the organization and requested to make an announcement regarding the project in some of their meetings. I recruited participants during those meetings. I explained the proposed research to the members of the department and requested to interview the appropriate stakeholders dealing with women in the department. The appropriate stakeholders were individuals who have worked at the institution for more than 12 years during the year that FASDEP II was formulated. I had four stakeholders from the administration level who volunteered to participate in the research. Again three key informants were recruited from the FBOs in the municipality through community gatherings with

female farmers in the communities. The participants included stakeholders who have worked at the municipality for more than 12 years. Aliases were given to the participants and their phone numbers were recorded to schedule meeting dates and times. I met stakeholders at a convenient and safe place that I chose. Informed consent forms were given to participants to read and sign prior to the interview session if they were willing to participate. The interview took approximately one hour of time.

### *3.6.2 Interviews with Female Farmers*

The project included female farmers from the three communities in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality who were 30 years old and above. This selection criterion was based on the year (2007) that the agriculture policy was formulated as well as farming activities that have been active for more than 12 years in the municipality. I interviewed twelve female participants who were in the labor force between the ages of 35 to 60 years old. The majority of the female participants were between 45 years old and above. All female farmers cultivated both food and cash crops in their communities. When the traditional authorities approved my project, I requested to announce my project to the communities using their information system like radio services in the communities. However, I used the community organizer to make a brief announcement in one community to gather all female farmers who were 30 years old and above. I made my announcement and recruited participants during the gathering.

For each community, I had between 3 to 5 volunteers. I was not able to recruit participants in some communities because there was no traditional authority available during my research period. There was no way I could recruit volunteers without getting permission from the leaders. Additionally, I visited a few communities where no one came out when the announcement was made, so I was not able to recruit participants in those communities. Aliases

were given to participants in the municipality and they gave their scheduled time convenient for them for the interview session. The interview took place at a venue convenient for the participants but chosen by me such as community center. Participants were given informed consent forms, I read to them, and the participant gave written consent by thumb printing or signing on the form prior to the interview session if willing to still participate. The interview took approximately 30 minutes of time.

Seidman(2006) explained that sufficiency criteria enables the researcher to have a variety of participants that replicate the population where other people not part of the sample could benefit from the experiences of the sample population chosen for the project. Saturation of information is another criterion where researchers hear the same information from participants at a point of data collection (Seidman, 2006). Although there has been significant debate about how many interviews and how to reach saturation (Douglas, 1976; Glaser & Strauss, 1967, Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Rubin & Rubin 1995), I found that after 19 interviews, no new themes were emerging. Based on the replication of themes and the limited timeframe, I stopped the data collection at this time.

### **3.7 Data Analysis and Reporting**

The digitally recorded interviews were translated from the local language to English language. I translated word to word without changing the meaning of what participants said. As suggested by Creswell (2013), analysis followed a process: “organizing data, conducting a preliminary read-through of database, coding and organizing themes, representing the data, and forming an interpretation of them” (p 178).

Nvivo software was used to manage raw data by organizing data into themes and creating codes to analyze the data. Therefore, I developed themes and sub-themes emerging from the

transcripts. I compared the responses, question by question as a framework for analysis. I constantly compared the approach between respondents; hence, going back and forth between participants' responses to explore common response and anomalies. These processes helped me to confirm the most important themes and provide detailed explanation of my findings from the data collected (Creswell, 2013). I review these finding in detail in chapter four.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Results**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, I explore the vital roles of women in the agricultural sector in the three communities in the Ejisu-Juaben Municipality to stress the need for their active involvement in agriculture policymaking. I explain why women made the decision to engage in farming in their communities and how women contribute to the agricultural sector. As well, I argue that there is a lack of accurate records and documentation of female farmers' outputs, which has an impact on involving women in decision-making and policymaking in the municipality. I discuss how women are involved in agricultural decision-making within the household, their communities, FBOs and Municipal Assembly. Then, I contrast this engagement with their lack of involvement at the policy level. Specifically, I look at barriers to involvement from the perspective of female farmers and stakeholders.

#### **4.2 Role of Women in Agriculture**

Farming is a necessity and the main source of livelihood for all the female respondents in the three communities in the Ejisu-Juaben Municipality. During the interviews, I asked the female respondents their reasons for engaging in farming in their communities. According to three women respondents namely: Adwoa, Stephany and Gina (farmers), they made the decision to engage in farming since farming provided them with money and food whilst Mafia and Maame (farmers) claimed they decided to be employed in the agricultural sector to get money to take care of their family. Kokor (farmer) stressed that she chose to do farming to get foodstuff; farming helped her to reduce the cost of buying foodstuff. In Ghana, mothers are caretakers of the home and make some domestic decisions to provide for the needs of their children. For this reason, some women respondents decided to use the money acquired from their farm to provide



for the needs of their children as confirmed by five women respondents. The five women respondents highlighted that, they decided to engage in farming to fulfill family responsibilities by providing for the needs of their children's as caregivers. Efe (farmer) also insisted that, she decided to engage in farming to provide property for her children. Akua and Akos (farmers) contended they chose to be involved in farming to survive in their communities as stated below:

*Akua (farmer): What motivated me to do farming is, when I came back from Kumasi to this community, there was hunger in this community and I was in hardship in terms of feeding, since food was scarce. Like around 1986, there was extreme hunger, you will not get food to buy, and if you get access to buy, it will be very expensive. Then I decided to engage in farming. Since 1987, I effectively started farming.*

*Akos (farmer): I was born into the occupation by my grandparents since that was their occupation. That time there was not much vocation like seamstress, hairdressing like now. Therefore, I entered farming since I did not have any other choice. I also had my first child at 17 years so this was so hard and made me enter into farming since that was the only occupation I could engage in at that time. I did not have an educative partner to help me financially to take care of the baby at that time, so farming was the only option I had.*

The above responses from the women respondents illustrate the importance of farming for rural women as it enabled them to fulfill their basic needs and domestic roles as caregivers. Women in the study were able to make decisions with respect to their livelihood but they described themselves as having a lack of choices with respect to access to resources.

Due to the importance of farming to the rural women, six of the respondents have engaged in farming for 20 to 29 years, three of the respondents for 10 to 19 years and three for 30 to 39 years. In this regard, women were actively involved in the agricultural sector and contributed to the development of Ghana as producers. The majority of the women respondents were engaged in both food crops and cash crop production in the municipality; however, only one female farmer was engaged in food crop production and for subsistence purposes. The

women explained that cash crop production was the main commodity produced; but, due to the time duration of the maturity period of the cash crop, they planted food crops in between the cash crops to get some income and food for their livelihood. Below was a response from Barb (Stakeholder) that confirms female farmers' main activity.

*Barb (Stakeholder): Generally, all the farmers are into cocoa production, but since cocoa takes decades to mature, farmers plant other crops like maize, cassava, plantain, etc. in between cocoa plants. This is because, by the time the cocoa mature, the farmer will get different kinds of crops at different farming seasons. Therefore, if the farmer does not have money, the food crop can sustain her for two to three years before the cocoa matures. We grow different types of crops before the cocoa matures which takes like 5 years.*

Particularly, seven agricultural stakeholders emphasised that women in the Ejisu-Juaben Municipality have decided to engage mainly in both cash crops and food crops production. The production of cash crops was for commercial purposes implying that female farmers interviewed decided to partake in agriculture activities for commercial purposes but not small scale. Cash crop production, such as cocoa provided cash for rural women interviewed. In this regard, some rural women chose to increase their farm sizes and productions. With respect to women's decisions to engage in cash crop production, they contributed massively to the foreign exchange earnings and development of the Republic of Ghana. Cocoa is one of the major export crops, which generates foreign exchange revenue for the development of Ghana. Irrespective of the active contribution of female farmers in the three communities in the Ejisu-Juaben Municipality, there was no effective mechanism to record and document their farm outputs, as I discuss in the next section.

#### *4.2.1 Factors Affecting Farmers' Productivity*

The majority of agriculture stakeholders interviewed argued that women's farm outputs were difficult to calculate; therefore, female farmers' outputs were not recorded or documented. Essel explained that, the agriculture institution had not been able to record all outputs of farmers in the municipality. Additionally, Essel and Kofi (stakeholders) further highlighted that, women's or farmers' output were recorded and documented only for specific projects, such as the "Planting for Food and Jobs Projects". According to four stakeholders, factors such as, farmers' inability to keep records of farm outputs and high farmer illiteracy rates hindered recording of farm outputs. There was a particularly high illiteracy rate among female farmers in the municipality. Among the participants in my study, five women respondents could not read and write, but they had basic education. Additionally, five other women respondents had never been to school. Only two respondents could read and write, since they had been to high school (refer to figure 1). The high illiteracy rate of female household respondents confirmed the inability of farmers to keep records of their outputs as stressed by the stakeholders. On the contrary, the percentage of citizens educated in one or more languages in the municipality from age 11 years and above was 84.7% (Ghana statistical service, 2010). Nevertheless, there was no statistics of literates regarding the percentage of female citizens or farmers (Ghana statistical service, 2010)

Two stakeholders from the FBOs, Joshua and Emefa, insisted that it was not important to record and document farm outputs. Some of the farmers explained that record keeping could reveal their post-harvest losses as well as income loss when they compare their records over years and this would be discouraging for them. Two other stakeholders highlighted a lack of resources (funds and weighing scale) as another barrier that challenged them from taking farmers' outputs and documenting in municipality files. Farmers' output when recorded could be added to national statistics for policy intervention.

My findings regarding challenges to record keeping contradicted findings from Doss (2010) who argued that women's food production was difficult to calculate since women did not cultivate crops separately from men and food production requires both women's and men's labor contributions. I found that even though the majority of the women respondents were married, they managed their own farms. The size of the farm of the women respondents requires some hired labor. Concerning this, Doss's (2010) argument can be confirmed with this finding, since calculating only women's output will be difficult because most of the respondents hire labor during the harvesting period of cocoa. However, female farmers only hire labour in the value chain, but did many of the farm activities, which implies their actual farm outputs could be calculated and recorded.

#### *4.2.2 Recommendations to Increase Women's Productivity*

Three stakeholder respondents suggested that, women needed to be trained to take records of their outputs. The stakeholders explained that farmers needed to be proficient in a manner that they could keep their own data at the farm gate level. Joshua (stakeholder) highlighted that the FBOs could help accumulate all the records of farmers and present them to the assembly for assessment after the training. Essel (stakeholder) also recommended that there should be a unit set up to record and document farmers' output. Another stakeholder from the FBOs suggested that extension officers should take initiatives to go to respective farmers to take all farm outputs. According to Isha (stakeholder), extension officers should have a good relationship with women and visit them from time to time. Isha further explained that when extension officers visit women from time to time, and are able to solve some of their farm problems, the women could provide any information they want in terms of their output since some women do not want to disclose their farm outputs for outsider to determine their income.

According to Isha (stakeholder), farmers especially female farmers, find it difficult to disclose their outputs due to lack of trust and unwillingness for their husband to find out their incomes by disclosing to others. The stakeholder added that some women had the perception that once their husbands find out their income, their husbands would appropriate some financial responsibilities for this income. For this reason, continuous visiting by the extension officers could create trust and some women may disclose confidential information to the officers. In Ghana, verbal consents are mostly used to release confidential information; hence, once trust is earned, women could have a verbal consent with the government officials to discuss confidential information.

With respect to the above responses, record keeping, and documentation of farmers' outputs was very relevant and can facilitate women's involvement in decision-making and policymaking. According to four stakeholders, they submitted reports to the top authorities for decision-making and policymaking to top agricultural authorities, so they were knowledgeable about the contributions of women to the agricultural sector. The top authorities could be informed to "plan with" farmers but not to "plan for" them in terms of decision-making and policymaking in the agricultural sector. For instance, if farmers' output were recorded, the top agricultural authorities would know the quantity of cocoa produced by women and would find strategies to involve them in the policy formulation to increase cocoa production and to boost the revenue of the country. Additionally, record keeping of female farmers' output could facilitate government decisions to supply resources for female farmers. The twelve female respondents complained of a lack of adequate resources from the government. If the government were given reports of female farmers' outputs periodically, it could persuade the authorities to find strategies to supply adequate resources to female farmers. Some of the female respondents claimed that since they were not given adequate resources from the government, they thought that their

contribution to decision-making in their communities did not reach the government authorities; hence, this influenced women's morale. Therefore, adequate supply of resources to female farmers could influence their contribution to community or municipal decisions and their trust in government. Inadequate access to resources to female farmers might perhaps have a great impact on active women's participation in decision-making and policymaking when opportunity was granted. The majority of women were more concerned about access to agriculture resources especially fertilizer, than policymaking. If the authorities wanted to involve women, they needed to provide resources to them. The women's main priority was to get access to productive resources, and this was, in part, why they were joining FBOs and going for community meetings. Indeed, most of the women were advocating for their needs in their communities by participating in decision-making. The next section focuses on how women's problems are addressed by participating in decision-making at the grassroots level.

#### **4.3. Involvement of Women in Agriculture Decision-making in their Households**

The majority of the women (eight) respondents indicated that they participated significantly in agriculture decision-making in their households. They made decisions with their husbands on a day-to-day basis. According to ten married women, they made agriculture decisions in their households jointly. The women argued that they had equal voice but not equal resources; hence, they made decision with their husbands to get some access to resources from their husbands for their farm activities. Generally, the female respondents lacked access to productive resources; hence, making decisions with their husbands in their households enables them to get funds and share or buy some resources like cutlasses, axes and hoes with the spouses. Seymour and Peterman (2018) confirmed this finding from my research that men and women had joint decisions because of the share of resources and roles among household members. The

women further stressed that men culturally need to provide for the needs of their wives, and they played the role of breadwinner in the household. The men were responsible for most financial needs of the wives according to the respondents. The majority of the married women respondents chose to make their day- to-day agriculture decisions with their spouses because culture also directed women to do so. In the Akan tribe where the majority of the women belong, it is customary for men to act as heads of the family. Women submitting to their husbands is a form of respect and a custom to follow in the household. However, the women claimed that they had voices in their household to contribute to all agriculture decisions discussed with their husbands. The participants further explained that they shared ideas with their husbands without their spouses sidelining their views; hence, they faced no problem having a voice, but they lack power about resources. Below are some stories from some female farmers confirming that their husbands did not sideline their ideas during agriculture decision-making in the households.

*Akos: I do not encounter any problem in participating since my husband makes me bring my views. He listens to me, so we do not have any issue on my side.*

*Mafia: I do not face any challenge to participate in household decision since my husband respects me and listens to my ideas and suggestions when making decisions.*

*Maame: I do not have any problem. I share my views freely without any fears. My home is very peaceful, and I even take the lead when it comes to discussions.*

*Adwoa: I have never faced any challenge to participate because I normally bring out the issue and he brings his ideas. We talk and decide.*

Some women felt that they were leading discussions in the household and all women felt that their perspectives were valued. Therefore, the majority of the married women indicated that the culture of deferring to men did not negatively affect their participation in the day-to-day agriculture decision-making in their households. Married women contributed to decision-making

in their households, but they sometimes relied on their husband's resources to transform those decisions into desired outcomes. Meena and Singh (2018) stressed that, when women are empowered, they get the confidence to make decisions regarding production and to participate in the marketing of their products. Study participants appeared confident to speak in the home but lacked economic resources to act on their ideas outside the home. Important policies could be designed on women's knowledge and successful implementation of such policies could facilitate.

In contrast, one married participant (farmer) argued that culture affected her participation in decision-making in her household negatively. Below was the participant's story:

*Kokor: I do everything with my husband. We think of the various ways we can carry out our farming activities. We also think of various ways to market our farm produce. There are instances whereby he would propose something, and I would object to it just because it could affect our work output on the farmland that in a way could decline our productivity. He mostly ignores my suggestion.*

*I sometimes propose an idea and he sideline most of them. It sometimes led to argument between the two of us.*

*Husbands being heads of the family play important role during decision-making and as a matter of fact need to be respected as such so I mostly try to condone to his suggestions and proposals so far as farming is concerned so as to avoid unnecessary argument.*

From Kokor's story, even though she participated in agriculture decision-making in her household, she did not participate extensively due to the cultural expectations that she should submit to the husband. From my literature review, I highlighted that researchers paid little attention to cultural differences in agricultural research, where culture is one of the factors that can affect women's decision-making power in most countries including Ghana. Culture plays a vital role in women's decision-making power in the household; hence, there is the need to focus on cultural factors in an attempt to enhance equity in women's participation in agriculture policymaking in the Municipality.



I found that some farmwomen made agriculture decisions on their own. For example, Attaa (farmer) was a married woman; however, made decisions alone, since her husband was not staying with her in the community. However, Attaa was able to make all her farm decisions and solve some of her production issues independently. Additionally, Mafia (farmer) who never married made agriculture decisions alone and sometimes, she consulted her adult children. The other farmer (Esi) who was in her 50's (widow) made agriculture decisions alone since the children were not interested in farming. According to Esi, making agriculture decisions alone sometimes made it difficult to know what to do. Nevertheless, Esi was able to make all her farm decisions independently. For instance, Esi was able to provide some of her needed resources such as farm implements by purchasing them through the sale of some farm products. These three women had the ability to act independently to get access to some production resources and solve some production issues. The three women were empowered because according to the World Bank (2007), women are empowered in the process of decision-making in that they had the ability to make choices and are able innovate such decisions into actions; however, they did not have access to resources from a spouse to transform some of their choices into action.

#### *4.3.1 Kinds of Agriculture Decision-Making in the Households*

From the above responses, participants both married and non-married made different kinds of agriculture decisions in their households. The female respondents identified three kinds of agriculture decisions made in the household, including access to resources and high production.

In Ghana, the government needs to support farmers in agriculture activity to enhance agricultural development and rural development. The respondents argued that the government did not provide farmers with resources except agrochemicals and training programmes, which

were not enough. The stakeholder respondents confirmed that they did not have enough resources for farmers except some fertilizer and training programmes. Therefore, the majority of the women had to make strategies with their husbands to get access to most resources (farm inputs). Ten female farmers made decision on ways to get access to productive resources such as cutlasses, hoes, agrochemicals, land, and funds. Specifically, four women made decisions on how to get access to funds (loans); one woman made decision on how to get more land; and the other five respondents made decisions on how to use money to buy and share farm inputs like cutlasses, agrochemicals, and hoes in their household. Generally, women faced financial constraints; hence, purchasing and sharing farm implements with their spouses helped them to increase their production. Below were some of the responses from three female farmers confirming the kinds of agriculture decisions they contributed to in their households concerning access to productive resources:

*Esi: We discuss how to get money. Money is what we use for our farming. Therefore, we just discuss more on how to get money to make our farming progressive. We discuss how to get loan specifically to buy farm inputs like fertilizer. My husband and I discuss how to share resources like cutlass and other basic tools. My husband and I are able to manage our finances by buying tools together.*

*Efe: What we normally discuss is about how best to get money to buy farm inputs. We also discuss how to share cutlass and axe together; we buy these tools together so we need to discuss how many or type of tool each of us will use for the day or week.*

*Attaa: We discuss how to get money to buy seedlings and how to share the seedlings on each farm. I mean my husband mostly buy most seedlings with his money and give me some. I do buy some to supplement since he does not give me the quantity I want.*

The final quote illustrates that, although they discussed decisions about production with their husbands, farmwomen did not always get the resources they discussed and required from their husbands.

In addition, seven respondents discussed production matters in their households including the number of fertilizers and seedlings to buy, the number of labourers to employ, kind of crops to plant and method of planting to increase production. In general, women had a voice and were empowered in their homes to contribute to discussions regarding their livelihood. The women felt their ideas, and their spouses took suggestions seriously. For instance, the majority of married women said they were able to make choices by bringing and sharing their ideas and transforming the ideas into desired outcomes with their husbands in their households. These women had a voice in their households and able to strategize with their husbands to come up with solutions to their productive problems. However, policies were not discussed in the households of women, but other relevant discussions helped their productivity and assisted them to solve some of their problems. Additionally, the non- married female farmers were able to make choices independently and transform the choices into actions in their households. Culture could have a negative impact on women's agriculture decision-making. Most men are heads of the family in Ghana, providing the needs of the women and their children; hence, women need to submit to their husbands in their household. Nevertheless, the majority of married respondents participate in the day- to -day agriculture decisions in their household significantly, and do not face much problem irrespective of submitting to their husbands (culture factor).

#### **4.4 Involvement of Women in Agriculture Decision in Communities**

The majority of the women (ten) respondents joined and participated in decision-making in their communities. However, findings by Ragsdale et al. (2018) and Quaye et al. (2016) indicated that women had low participation in agriculture decision-making in other selected communities in Ghana, but these findings were not reflected in my study areas. According to the women respondents, they were vulnerable in terms of access to productive resources in their

communities. Some women believe that participating in community meetings will enable the government to know about their grievances and provide them with more resources. The story below from Akos confirms this finding:

*Akos: Farmers in this community need help in terms of farm implements and funds. When we meet, we discuss our obstacles, which are always about farm implement and funds. Farmers are suffering because most of us are not educated to get other white-collar jobs and apply large implement on the farm. The government is not helping us in any way. Therefore, when we meet we discuss our problems and we always hope they get to the government but not sure, they do because most of our problems are not resolved. However, we always go to meetings when we are called. We always talk about the same problems and we believe some of our problems will get to the government one day and that is why we are not discouraged from attending meetings. I do not know if it is our leaders or the assembly who are not representing our problems for them to be resolved.*

Akos was motivated to join and participate in agriculture decision-making in her community to get access to available resources (agrochemicals) and to let the government know her problems. According to Akos, some women attended meetings with the same intentions. Most of the female respondents confirmed that they go for community meetings to discuss how to get access to resources by sharing the available resources and making strategies to access more. Therefore, the lack of adequate resources influenced women to join and participate in community discussions.

Many of the women identified a lack of access to productive resources like farm implements, agrochemicals, and loans (credit). I confirmed the findings from research by Duncan (1997) and Amu (2004) that women lack access to productive resources in Ghana and my study areas were no exception. Duncan (1997) and Amu (2004) highlighted that women lack productive resources in areas such as education, land acquisition, agriculture extension and access to credit. However, I found that the women respondents lack access to education, credit, agrochemicals and farm implements. Indeed, the women respondents had access to land and

extension services, which were contrary to the two researchers' findings and perhaps, reflect progress over time. Many of the female farmers acquired land through inheritance and did not pay for them. Additionally, most of the female respondents had access to extension services in their communities. The municipal officers provided training programs to all farmers or female farmers to increase production. In this regard, the programs treated women as lacking knowledge rather than addressing their resource needs. All the women argued that they do face some financial constraints to buy the basic farm inputs. Certainly, the majority of women did not have access to credit from government or financial organizations to support their farm activities. On the contrary, two female respondents mentioned that they get access to loan from Self Help Organisation. The Self-Help Organisation (a private organization), according to the two respondents, gave financial support to farmers who were members of FBOs in the communities. Additionally, the female farmers stressed that the government brought some agrochemicals to farmers, but the quantities given were not enough for their farms; hence, this had been their major problem since the agrochemicals are very expensive to be purchased by poor farmers like them. The women further emphasized that they had to meet in their communities to get access to the small number of agrochemicals shared by government officials to respective farmer.

Again, the women participants stressed that decision-making at the community level were made through gatherings. The community allowed all farmers, including both men and women to meet and share ideas and make decisions together. The community had leaders or extension officers who facilitated the decision-making process in the community. The women explained that community gatherings happened once or twice a year. Women felt there were not enough community meetings to address most of their agriculture issues collectively. The participants further highlighted that regardless of the few numbers of meeting times available in their

communities, most women felt they participated extensively in any kind of decision-making because they were free to contribute and voiced their concerns.

#### *4.4.1 Kinds of Decision-Making in the Communities*

I identified three kinds of agriculture decision-making discussions that women participated in within their communities. Most farmwomen (ten) interviewed indicated that they got the opportunity to participate in agriculture decision-making in their communities by sharing ideas on agrochemical distribution, farm issues, and farmer-based organizations. Particularly, four women respondents, namely Gina, Attaa, Stephany, and Akos (farmers), participated in decision-making in their communities by sharing ideas on ways to distribute agrochemicals from the government. The four women emphasized that, in their community, decision-making purposely focused on the sharing of agrochemicals that the government provided to the community. The four women respondents were from one community. Secondly, I found that four other women respondents were involved in community decisions by participating in capacity building discussions. Capacity building, in this case, is the ability of the female to form a farmer-based organization to be able to provide self-help to get access to productive resources and help themselves. Certainly, the four women explained that the community members met to discuss FBOs and the need for farmers to join such a collective to increase access to resources. FBOs could facilitate farmers' ability to solve some development issues, and could enable them to pull out funds together and provide resources on credit to farmers (see section 4.5 for details). Finally, three other women (Esi, Akos, and Stephany) confirmed that the decision-making in their communities was based on farm issues. The issues stressed by the three respondents were based on access to productive resources such as farm implements and agrochemicals. The

women further stressed that the extension officers come to the communities sometimes to discuss those farm issues with farmers.

#### *4.4.2 Challenges Affecting Active Participation of Women in Decision-Making*

The majority of women respondents were actively involved in decision-making in their community. The women explained that everyone was treated fairly during the decision-making process in their communities and they spoke freely during community meetings. Below were some responses from two women confirming the above finding:

*Akua: I do not face any challenge. This is because, everyone is given the opportunity to share and bring ideas. No one disrespects you or argues with you when you bring ideas.*

*Akos: I do not face any problem to participate in decision-making in my community because we are given equal chance to talk and make suggestions.*

Nevertheless, Kokor was the only respondent who faced problems to contribute to decision-making in her community. Kokor argued that she did not participate in agriculture decision-making in her community actively, but she joined the meetings. She explained that some members of the communities sidelined her ideas, which discouraged her to participate actively. Two stakeholders also argued that women from Islamic communities were not as involved in agriculture decision-making due to cultural and religious factors. Quaye et al. (2016) confirmed in their research that women in Islamic communities in Ghana did not participate actively in agriculture decision-making; however, women in non-Islamic communities participate actively. According to Quaye et al. (2016), the women in Islamic communities respect their household heads by giving them full responsibility to decide on their behalf resulting to low participation rate of those women. From my research, some stakeholders stressed that women needed permission from their husbands before partaking in decision-making in their communities with

the stakeholders. The stakeholders further explained that, in Muslims communities, women were responsible for all domestic roles; hence, the women were not allowed to leave their domestic roles and join meetings in their communities. Additionally, one stakeholder (Araba) argued that some meetings were limited to women, but their husbands sometimes want to know the topic to be discussed with their wives before permission is granted. The stakeholders argued that culture and religious factors were affecting their roles to actively involve Muslim female farmers, especially in decision-making in their zones. Below was Araba's (stakeholder) story regarding factors hindering women's participation in decision-making in the communities:

*Araba: In the communities I am operating, most of the farmers are Muslims and their norms are different. Their traditions and their norms are different altogether. So, if you are an extension agent and you want to meet Muslim women, you have to tackle their men first because you cannot just go there and tackle their women or else the men will never understand.*

*Sometimes, you might want information that you would not love their husband to be aware, so it becomes so difficult. There is gender analysis and when you go to the field, you will notice that the women suffer a lot especially Muslim women so it is hard to consult them to know their main issues about that since you need to consult their husbands that ideally should not know about this.*

Araba (stakeholder) underlined that patriarchy affected women's participation in agriculture decision-making in their communities. She explained that in Muslims communities, men control decision-making in their homes and have full control over their spouses' participation in the community as Quaye et al. (2016) identified; hence, women were not empowered to speak up when their husbands were involved during discussions in their communities. Some meetings were organized for all farmers to share views. Furthermore, the women in Muslim communities faced low participation in agriculture decision-making in their household as stressed by the stakeholders (Quaye et al., 2016). However, I only had one participate who identified as Muslim, but she was a widow; hence, she made all her agriculture decisions independently. Seymour and



Peterman (2018) stressed that women's participation in intrahousehold decision-making was used as a basis of empowerment. Therefore, as these Muslim women were not empowered to participate massively in decision-making in the household, which might also affect their confidence to speak up during meetings outside their homes as suggested by the stakeholder interviewed.

Two women respondents, Efe and Esi, did not participate in decision-making in their communities. Esi explained that she had more workload and did not have time to join and participate in community meetings. On the other hand, Efe highlighted that there was no agriculture decision-making in her community except farmers' day where farmers were gathered, and decisions were made to award the farmers based on their outputs. According to Efe, the government gave awards to farmers who were members of FBO's where their leaders make all decisions. In light of this, Efe did not participate in agriculture decision-making in her community, since she was not a member of an organization in her community. Efe argued that she grew food crops; therefore, she would not get the opportunity to join any FBO since the members of the organizations were solely cash crop farmers. Efe claimed that she is willing to participate in agriculture decision-making when allowed to share her views during meetings. In light of this, workload and crop types were factors hindering the two women's active participation in agriculture decision-making in their communities.

The above responses indicate that the majority of female farmers interviewed were involved in agriculture decision-making in their communities, to some extent, by sharing their ideas in community gatherings. The meeting schedules for decision-making in the communities were most convenient and decided by most of the female farmers, which conformed to their high participation rate. According to some stakeholders, since women had domestic roles, meetings

were scheduled in the evening or taboo days (the days reserved for the ancestors and farmers were forbidden to go to their farms on those days) to ensure the high attendance of the female farmers. Women generally had high workloads including domestic roles, childbearing, and farm roles. Irrespective of the workload, many respondents attended meetings and participated in all discussions in their communities. However, the participants revealed that there were not many meetings at the community level and most of the meetings focused on access to productive resources.

The responses indicate that female farmers were not consulted to discuss agriculture policies in their communities. For instance, none of the women respondents highlighted any community meetings organized to discuss farmers' ideas and suggestions regarding any agriculture policies that had emerged over the years. Some women respondents emphasized that some agriculture stakeholders came to the communities to meet farmers. However, the women respondents explained that the stakeholders did not discuss any action plans or policies with the farmers in their communities. The women respondents further stressed that the stakeholders only distribute agrochemicals or facilitate training programs and sometimes consulted farmers during projects like planting for food and job projects. The majority of the women participated in meetings in their communities to get access to resources, since that was their main problem.

I observed that most female farmers participated in decision-making in their communities to get access to productive resources. Four respondents who claimed decision-making in their communities involves FBOs but was still centered on getting access to productive resources. FBOs (see chapter 4.5 for more details) were a medium through which farmers could get access to productive resources; hence, most farmers were motivated to join the organizations. My research stressed that four women respondents participated in the sharing of agrochemicals and

the other four females participated in a discussion on the farmers' group. For this reason, eight respondents participated in decision-making in their communities to get access to productive resources. Additionally, their anticipation was high during meetings, especially meetings with stakeholders, since they assumed their problems would be addressed, as they share some problems with the stakeholders, whether asked or not. However, the eight female farmers argued that the stakeholders had not solved most of their production issues, but they still participated in community decision meetings. I also observed that it was difficult for women in Muslim communities to be involved in decision-making in their communities. I visited a Muslim community but did not get any participants and I was informed by some men that the women are busy in their homes doing house chores. My observation in this regard confirmed the response from the stakeholders, where women in Muslim communities had difficulties participating in decision-making in the communities.

#### **4.5 Involvement of Women in Agriculture Decisions in Farmer-Based Organizations (FBOs)**

In this section, I discuss the accessibility, importance, and challenges faced by women to join the FBOs in their studied communities. I also examine how women participate in decision-making in the FBOs to anticipate their involvement in policymaking when the government involves FBOs in policymaking. Asante et al. (2011) stressed that FBOs currently promote the ideas of their members in various mediums on policymaking and play a vital role in local development planning and agriculture development. Therefore, the FBOs are an easier medium through which policymaking can involve farmers at the grassroots level.

#### *4.5.1 Women's Access to Join Farmers-Based Organisations*

FBOs are a form of community gathering, specifically for farmers, which could be a female only group, a male only group, or a joint group. Many of the women respondents (nine) had access to join FBOs in their communities. According to the nine respondents, the government and the community leaders had encouraged the farmers to join FBOs to get access to resources, and the women had understood the benefits of belonging to groups in their communities. The remaining three women respondents, who are from one community, did not have access to join FBOs; however, they were willing to join one when formulated, since they knew the importance of belonging to FBOs. The three women were from a community that had not established any FBO; however, the other two communities I visited had established FBOs. Most of the female farmers identified the importance of joining an FBO including the three female farmers who did not have access.

#### *4.5.2 Importance of Joining Farmers-Based Organisations*

Indeed, five female farmers namely Mafia, Kokor, Milli, Akos and Attaa, joined the FBOs to have access to government resources. The five female farmers emphasized that the government supplied agrochemicals to the farmer groups but not individual farmers. Therefore, the women decided to join the organisation to get access to agrochemicals whenever they were available to the organizations. Below were what some female farmers said:

*Akos (farmer): Joining the Farmer-Based Organisation helps to get support from the government like fertilizer and other resources like seedlings sometimes.*

*Mafia (farmer): To belong to a farmers' group help you to get any resources that the government is sharing to farmers. Therefore, it is very good to be part of Farmer-Based Organisation since it will help you get resources available to farmers.*

*Kokor (farmer): I joined the group purposely to get support from the government, which includes getting access to resources from the government, easy access to loans and a whole lot to help me with my farm work.*

Kokor and Akos further stressed that they decided to join the FBOs to get access to a loan to help with their farm. According to those two female respondents, financial organizations gave loans to farmers only when they were members of FBOs. Furthermore, three other female farmers stressed that they joined FBOs to get farm assistance from other members of the organization. Precisely, two women said, they got farm assistance, such as laborers, whilst one other woman accentuated that, she got help in terms of methods of planting by joining FBOs to increase yield. The Municipal Assembly provided training opportunities to farmers who belong to FBOs. Two farmers confirmed that they joined farmer-based organizations to get training opportunities from the Municipal Assembly to help increase their production. The responses from many of the respondents indicate that they joined FBOs to get access to resources such as education (training) and agrochemicals from the government and credit from a financial institution. The female respondents elaborated on the kind of decisions women help to formulate in their organisations.

#### *4.5.3 How Women Were Involved in FBOs' Decisions*

According to the majority of women respondents, the main kind of decisions discussed in the FBOs are centered on getting access to productive resources. FBO's stakeholders also confirmed that farmers were encouraged to form groups to get access to productive resources from the government. This was the stakeholders' story confirming this finding:

*Kwodjo (stakeholder): The government brought it up that, farmers should form groups. The group helps farmers to get any available resources available at some places by the government like Bekwai and other places. Therefore, as a group, we can go and get some resources from other districts.*

The female farmers claimed that they participated in specific decisions to get access to productive resources such as how to register the organization and pull out resources to buy shares. The following were some responses from participants concerning the kind of decision-making in their organizations.

*Kokor (farmer): When we meet as a group, we look for ways and means we can register the organisation with the government of Ghana. I contribute my ideas since registering the organisation will help farmers including me get access to more resources from the government.*

*Kwodjo (stakeholder): We plan on how to register the organisation of which we succeeded last Saturday. We make decisions on the best way to buy shared to sell agriculture inputs in the community to enable farmers of this organisation to buy inputs at a reduced price. This will make the organisation make some capital from that, which can be used as loans for farmers as time goes on.*

*Stephany (farmer): We discuss what will make the organization more successful. Some time we discuss the amount of money to contribute. I also participate in discussion regarding how we can help ourselves pull resources to help one another.*

The above response indicated that FBOs did not discuss any policy or decisions made by government officials; instead, they focused on resources.

Many female respondents and three stakeholders from the FBOs stressed that women participate extensively and actively in any kind of decision-making in the organizations. According to two stakeholders, the number of females in the joint groups were extensive, since fourteen out-of-thirty, members were female and were outspoken during meetings. On the other hand, the other stakeholder insisted that their organization was made up of only females.

#### *4.5.4 Factors Hindering Active Participation of Women in Decision-making in FBOs*

Most of the respondents who belong to FBOs did not identify any challenge to participate in the organizations 'meetings. Below were some responses from participants that confirm this finding:

*Akua: Personally, I do not face any challenge as a member of the organization.*

*Mafia: I do not face any challenge as a member*

*Maame: I do not face my challenge to be honest. The organization gives everyone opportunity to talk.*

*Attaa: I do not any challenge as a member of the organization.*

*Milli: I currently do not have a challenge*

*Stephany: I do not face any challenge to participate in the meetings in my organization.*

On the other hand, Akos was the only respondent who faced a challenge to participate actively in FBOs. Akos explained that financial constraints affected her participation since she sometimes found it difficult to pay her dues and loans on time to help the organization get more access to a loan. For this reason, when she knew she owed she chose not to go for meetings sometimes or talk during discussions.

To conclude this section, the FBOs enhance capacity building where farmers made decisions to pull resources together for their development. Additionally, the organizations enabled farmers to come together; hence, they could act as pressure groups to get some resources from the government as well as form collateral for loans from a financial institution. The participation of female farmers in the organization was more extensive than previously thought (Raišienė et al, 2018). The group could be represented at the municipal levels during policy discussions, through their female leaders. However, the FBOs did not meet to discuss policy subjects.

#### **4.6. Involvement of Women in the Agriculture Decisions in the Municipal Assembly**

The Municipal Assembly adopted a bottom-up approach in most of its decision-making processes. The stakeholders interviewed emphasized that the Municipal Assembly involved women in agriculture decision-making by consulting them in their respective communities.

However, the stakeholders contended that, due to inadequate resources, they were not able to reach out to many of the communities in the municipality. Again, both patriarchal and religious culture, in gender, existing in some communities prevented women from being involved. The majority of stakeholders at the Municipal Assembly explained that they visited communities in the municipality to know farmers' grievances and progress; hence, they wrote a report and discussed during meetings. Three stakeholders from FBOs confirmed that some agriculture authorities came to their organizations to discuss farmers' problems, and they submitted a report for further discussion at the municipal level, but they do not talk about policies. The three stakeholders highlighted that in some cases basic problems get solutions during the discussions. Below was (stakeholder) Kofi's story illustrating this finding:

*Kofi: At the planning session, we conduct that at the farmers' level and know their problems, achievement and the way forward. Therefore, we make the planning session at their level, send a report to the Municipal Assembly, and present it to the director. Sometimes it's MOFA, which should help farmers. Sometimes, the farmers needs to help themselves and sometimes the Municipal Assembly has to help. When we meet for the planning session, we get to know the problems faced by farmers. Because when you do not do the planning session, you will never know the problems faced by farmers and the way forward and report it to the director of the Municipal Assembly.*

Many of the stakeholders further stressed that, in some cases, the municipal stakeholders invited women for meetings at the Municipal Assembly level. The municipal meetings involved women in discussions around formulating action plans, knowing farmers' problems, medium-term plans and policies from the top authorities. Concerning the action plans, Essel (stakeholder) claimed that they were developed from the agriculture policy documents, and the plans were to be implemented for some periods in the municipality. For this reason, all stakeholders met and brought out ideas to formulate action plans. The stakeholders entailed all personnel in the agriculture department and some farmers. However, Isha emphasized that, in some meetings,



representatives such as department heads were present to make decisions after having departmental meetings. Below were some responses from some stakeholders that confirmed these findings:

*Essel: Municipal decisions are made from the national policy objective and when we are handed over the objective from the national level, we invite stakeholders and we just do what we call stakeholders' consultative workshop where the constraints of the farmers would be brought on board at the local level and then we align the constraints to the national objectives. Based upon that, we draw action plans with respect to the decisions that we take and implement the plans within a timeframe approved by the top authorities.*

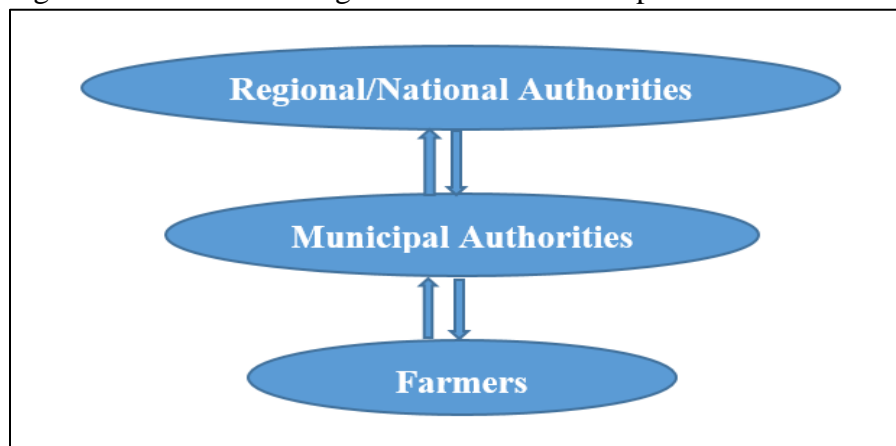
*Isha: We meet to discuss action plans. We meet with farmers to make action plan for the year. We have district directors. We have crop officers, veterinary officer, livestock animal officer and extension officers. All these officers including farmers will meet and discuss the issue at respective field as well as the challenges each officer is encountering and try to solve them. We share ideas during meetings.*

Secondly, according to Isha (stakeholder), the Municipal Assembly invited farmers, including female farmers, to know the general problems faced by women in their respective communities. Isha argued that, previously, the Municipal Assembly was not including women in the decision-making process, but they currently do. Three stakeholders also stressed that women were involved in the decision-making process since the government had passed a policy to ensure that Municipal Assembly include at least 30 percent female representatives (including female farmers) in their decision-making process. According to those stakeholders, the government wanted to ensure equality in the participation in agriculture decisions; hence, that informed the 30 percent minimum female participation policy. Essel (stakeholders) explained that women's participation could be more than 30 percent, but it should not be at less than 30 percent. Essel further highlighted that the extension officers in the communities chose the 30 percent of women randomly, but not farmer-based organizations' leaders or representatives, and

the chosen female farmers were literate and out-spoken farmers according to the stakeholder respondents. The majority of the stakeholders argued that the FBOs are a medium to get access to resources either from the government or from self-help, but the organizations were not mandated to represent farmers in municipal meetings.

Thirdly, two stakeholders underlined that decision-making at the municipal level focused on decisions or policies from the top authorities at the regional or national level. Two stakeholders emphasised that the government consulted the municipal stakeholders for inputs (ideas) when formulating policies; therefore, the municipal stakeholders met and shared their views and suggestions, then reports were sent out for further discussions. Again, when the policies were formulated, they were brought back to the Municipal Assembly to make action plans and other decisions. For instance, according to Kofi (Stakeholder), *“they discuss policies from the government when the director represents the municipality at the regional or national level.”* The majority of the agricultural stakeholders explained, policies are formulated at the national level and implemented at the municipal or district level. For this reason, the head of the organization represented the organization at the regional level or national level; hence, he brought feedback for decision-making at the municipal level. Isha also confirmed that at the municipal level, decision-making emphasised policies from top authorities at the national or regional level. Figure 1 below illustrates the decision-making process at the Ejisu-Juaben Municipality.

Figure 6: Decision-making Process at the Municipal Level



Source: Nyankson (author), 2020.

Figure one illustrates that the decision-making process moves from farmers to Municipal Assembly authorities and ascends to the national or regional authorities who make agriculture policies or plans and vice versa. The Municipal Assembly involved farmers, including women, in the decision-making process due to gender quotas and guidelines instituted in most agriculture policies in Ghana. Also, the Municipal Assembly had learned or recognised the benefits of involving the female farmers.

#### 4.6.1 Benefits of Including Women in the Decision-Making Process

Stakeholders' emphasis on women's inclusion in the decision-making process enabled the local government to seek better ideas to make good decisions and plan in the municipality. Particularly, Essel highlighted that women's involvement in the decision-making process enabled the Municipal Assembly to make informed decisions. The following responses confirm these findings:

*Essel: If women are part of decision- making, they help decide the right way. Even in terms of marketing, women decide that consumers like the red cocoyam or yellow cocoyam, so if you do not involve them, how will we know*

*the most consumable cocoyam by consumers? It helps a lot to include women in the decision-making process.*

*Emefa: Women are so active in farming and we cannot do without them when making a decision in the organization. Women's ideas during meeting discussions are so great and enable the group to compare with men's ideas to come to a final decision. If we do not include, there is no way this organization will be active in operation.*

Additionally, Kofi highlighted that it is important to include women in the decision-making process especially at the planning session to facilitate easy implementation of action plans from the policies at the municipal level. Again, Kofi stressed that women's inclusion in the decision-making process helped the organisation to know the needs of the women. The responses from the stakeholders implied that planning with the beneficiary could facilitate successful implementation of action plans in the municipality. For this reason, the beneficiaries were mostly involved in the decision-making process through consultation at the community level. The majority of the stakeholders again stressed that women were included in the decision-making process including the municipal decisions to mainstream gender in the agriculture policies and programmes.

The Food and Agricultural sector Development Policy (FASDEP I) highlighted insufficient gender mainstreaming as a constraint hindering women's productivity. Hence, the government included strategies of ensuring gender mainstreaming in the second phase of FASDEP after stakeholders' consultation (MOFA, 2007). Precisely, most of the agriculture stakeholders interviewed emphasized that they mainstreamed gender in their action plans and training programmes by involving women in the decision-making process, since women were vulnerable unlike their male counterparts. Therefore, they went to the communities to solicit women's ideas and invite some of the females to the municipal meetings; however, the male farmers had higher participation rates than the female farmers. According to the municipal

stakeholders interviewed, the majority of the women did not come for municipal meetings when they were invited but participated when consulted in their communities.

#### *4.6.2 Factors Affecting Active Participation of Women*

Essel explained that since the meetings included male and female farmers, most female farmers do not have confidence to join the meeting due to their low educational level. Most of the female farmers claimed that they were not educated, and it was not possible for them to be part of such meetings at the Municipal Assembly. Additionally, some women assumed that meetings at the municipal level were conducted in the English language; hence, they would be intimidated to join such meetings.

Araba also said that it was not women's priority to be involved in decision-making at the Municipal Assembly, since the women did not complain about not being involved in the decision-making process. Araba further explained that women's priority is to get access to productive resources, but not to be involved in municipal decisions. Nevertheless, when women were consulted in their communities, they contributed ideas and participated greatly in the decision-making. But, many of the women were not involved in Municipal Assembly meetings according to the stakeholders.

Patriarchal culture also hindered agriculture stakeholders in involving female farmers in municipal decision-making from some communities in the municipality. According to the stakeholders, the husbands of women in some communities in the municipality did not allow their wives to join meetings without the spouses knowing the content of those meetings.

Additionally, most of the stakeholders argued that they did not have adequate resources, both material and human, to reach out to the majority of communities in the municipality to include them in their decision-making. There were not enough extension officers employed in

the municipality; therefore, one extension officer served more than two communities. The extension officers did not have adequate resources, such as transport and funds, to reach out to many women in their zone. These problems created barriers for women in most communities to be involved in Municipal Assembly decision-making.

Concisely, the participation of women in Municipal Assembly decisions was low due to culture, inadequate resources, organisational/representational barriers, and high illiteracy rate among the female farmers. Judging by responses above, the Municipal Assembly did not use a good mechanism to choose women (30 percent) for their meetings. For instance, women farmers were chosen based on educational level; however, the opinions of those women might not reflect the majority of women. The Municipal Assembly is not making use of the FBOs, since the majority of the chosen women, according to the stakeholders, were not necessarily leaders of the organisations. Leaders of the FBOs could provide better representation of all farmers in communities in the municipality as farmers' groups are very effective in their operations. Most of the stakeholders argued that FBOs were mandated to provide self-help among farmers, but not to facilitate active participation of farmers in the municipality. Indeed, the barriers to Municipal Assembly decision-making due to the above factors, created a barrier for women to be involved in the policymaking, since policies are only discussed at the Municipal Assembly.

#### **4.7 Involvement of Women in Formulation of FASDEP II**

The Food and Agricultural sector Development Policy II was formulated in 2007. According to most of the stakeholders, the document was the current policy used by the Ejisu Municipal Assembly. FASDEP II aimed to improve the situation of all kinds of farmers, especially the vulnerable producers, through extensive stakeholder consultation process. The policy document (FASDEP II) was developed to include the lessons learned from executing

FASDEP I (Republic of Ghana, 2007). The policy document revealed that farmers, including women, are faced with several challenges hindering their productivity, but the challenges faced by most of my participants did not reflect what is in the policy document. According to the majority of the respondents, they were faced with inadequate resources, such as agro-chemicals, farm implements and credit. The FBOs also confirmed that males encounter same challenges as their female counterparts. None of the participants emphasized on low participation in decision-making or policymaking at the municipal, regional, or national level. Nevertheless, extensive participation of women in decision-making and policymaking can help the national authorities to know the actual problems faced by most women; hence, strategies can be integrated in the policy or plans to address those challenges. In this section, I elaborate on how women were involved in the formulation of the agriculture policy (FASDEP II), the factors that hindered active participation of the women, and the recommendations made by the participants to enhance their activity in the policymaking.

#### *4.7.1 How Women Were Involved in the Formulation of FASDEP II*

There were few (two) women who felt they were involved in the formulation of the agriculture policy. Below were excerpts from two women who were involved:

*Mafia: Yes, I was involved in the formulation of the policy. This is because since we are farmers and have formed farmers-based organizations, we normally share our problems during meetings and our leaders tell the extension officer. Therefore, I believe that the extension officer sent it to the office to be considered in the formulation of the policy during national meeting. I know for sure that, the little problem we discussed during meetings were carried to the government. That is what I know so I think I was involved.*

*Attaa: In a way, I feel involved in the formulation of agriculture policies (FASDEP) in the Municipality. We met the extension officer or agricultural officers and made them aware of our problems and they let the government know about them I think.*

From the above responses, the women suspected they were involved in the formulation of the agriculture policy by sharing their problems with municipal authorities such as the extension officers. However, the second excerpt from Attaa illustrated some doubt among farmwomen perhaps because she did not know whether the policy documents incorporated her concerns. In this case, the women were not involved actively since they only discussed their problems but no other matters relevant to formulation of the policy document. The stakeholders interviewed from the Municipal Assembly confirmed that women were not very involved in the formulation of the policy since female farmers only shared their problems during meetings. Some of the stakeholders explained that they wrote reports and presented them to the head of the institution during meetings and represented the farmers as well. There was no specific meeting organized to solicit for ideas regarding policy; however, the stakeholders interviewed claimed that they solicited views and problems facing farmers during their training programs. In addition, there was no meeting organized for only female farmers by stakeholders except meetings by “Women in Agriculture Development” stakeholders. The majority of stakeholders further explained that the training programs (action plans) came from a policy; hence, the feedback influenced new policy. For instance, the lessons learned from FASDEP I influenced FASDEP II. Moreover, the policy approach was very top-down with only minimal consultation with farmwomen.

#### *4.7.2 Factors That Hindered Active Participation of Women*

Most of the respondents emphasized that they were not involved in the formulation of the FASDEP II. There were several factors stressed by both stakeholders and female farmers about why women were not involved in the formulation of the agriculture policy. According to two female respondents, they were not given the opportunity by the government to be involved in the



policy. The women emphasized that they did not hear any information regarding the policy in their communities. The two women's responses are below:

*Akua: I was not involved in the formulation of the policy because I was not given the opportunity to participate. I did not hear anything about that.*

*Akos: I do not get the opportunity to be part of any decision-making or policymaking in the municipality or at the government level.*

One of the stakeholders from the FBOs also confirmed that farmers in the community were not allowed to be involved in the policymaking. The stakeholder further explained that no government official consulted farmers with respect to a policy from the national level.

Additionally, five female farmers insisted that FBOs were not registered; therefore, it hindered women's participation in the establishment of the policy. The women explained that the government recognized only registered organizations in Ghana; therefore, the government might include only registered organizations in policymaking. The women further emphasized that in terms of the distribution of resources, the government gave resources to farmers who belonged to registered groups. Those female farmers believed that they could not participate in the formulation of any policy from the national level unless their organizations were registered, which costs money, but the farmers do not have the money to facilitate that process.

Another factor that hindered women's participation in the formulation of the agriculture policy is illiteracy. Four female farmers emphasized illiteracy; they assumed they were not involved in the establishment of the policy because they did not have high levels of education:

*Akua: No because I was not given the opportunity to join. I did not hear anything about that. Because I do not have much education, that could be another reason why I was not involved about it to be included. This is because such policy needs farmers who are highly educated to share ideas and suggestions, so, with my basic education, there is no way I will be consulted. I never saw any meeting in this community regarding the policy too.*

*Mafia: What prevented me was, I have not gone to school so the government will never involve me. They only include people who are educated but I am not.*

*Maame: Because I am not literate, that is why. The government always would include people who can speak English and write. I cannot so it will be hard. The assembly also did not come to us and include us since they only involve the farmers who are educated in such policy.*

The stakeholders claimed that they included farmers in municipal meetings with respect to policymaking or decision-making, but mostly the educated farmers.

Three female farmers indicated that some government officials from the Municipal Assembly did not represent farmers' problems to the policy makers or national authorities.

Below were some responses:

*Adwoa: The assembly come to know our problems, but it goes nowhere. That is why I think I was not involved.*

*Attaa: I did not participate in the formulation of the policy because the unwillingness of the extension officers or assembly to take some farmers problems including mine during meetings to national officials to make the policy.*

Two farmer-based organizations' leaders also stated that the leaders in the municipality did not carry farmers' issues to the government, even when farmers tell them. One leader highlighted that even when their organizations were registered at that time, the farmers would still not be included in the formulation of the policy. The stakeholder explained that the government officials hesitated to carry their information to the national officials. The stakeholders from the Municipal Assembly contended that they carried all farmers' information to the municipal office; however, the representative of the municipality presents the common problems from all the communities consulted. The responses indicate that the government officials carry farmers' problems across the board, but not all farmers' problems could be presented as most farmers have common problems such as inadequate resources.

The stakeholders from the Municipal Assembly also elaborated on some factors that hindered women to be involved in the formulation of the policy. According to most of the stakeholders, inadequate resources were the main factor hindering their roles to involve women or farmers in the formulation of the policy. Seven stakeholders explained that there were inadequate financial resources to get access to transportation and get some needed materials for farmers. Since the majority of the farmers were consulted in their communities rather than at the municipal level, the government officials needed funds to consult most communities to solicit views from female farmers. The Municipal Assembly relied on the national authorities (government) for many of its resources and the resources were not supplied; hence, they faced challenges reaching more communities to include women in any discussion. Below was Isha's story:

*Isha: Resources are also factor, because I do not have the resources to move to all communities to seek for ideas when the need arises. I sometimes want to organize training programs and know the views and problems of those women to get more success stories to present during our meetings; however, I am limited because I will not get money to carry out my plan.*

Inadequate human resources like agriculture professionals also affected women's participation in the formulation of the agriculture policy. One of the stakeholders stressed that at the administrative level, women were few; hence, there were few numbers of women to speak on behalf of women in the agricultural sector. For instance, a stakeholder was the only female among the heads of departments in the Municipal Assembly. When female leaders are few at the administrative level, there is a likelihood of bias in decision-making and this does not facilitate equity and gender mainstreaming.

Furthermore, the same cultural barriers at work at the community level played a role in preventing women's participation in the formulation of the agriculture policy. According to Isha,

some communities were difficult to access, especially in Muslim communities due to the behavior of their husbands. Isha stressed that the men in Muslim communities did not let their wives attend meetings or training programs without consulting the men. For this reason, women in those communities were hard to involve in meetings during the formulation of the policy as emphasised by the stakeholder.

One female participant did not want to be involved in the formulation of agriculture policies. According to her, she has too much work; hence, will not have time to participate in any meeting about policymaking. The woman further stressed, she was content with any policy formulated by the government and would not be affected negatively from not participating in its formulation. Therefore, the workload of women including domestic, economic, and childbearing activities were factors that affected some women including this woman from being involved in the policymaking.

#### *4.7.3 Recommendations to Include Women Actively*

The female farmers suggested ways at which they would have wanted to be involved in the formulation of the policy. According to four women, they would have preferred to share their problems with government officials when given the opportunity to formulate the policy documents. Below are their responses:

*Maame: If the government were to call for a meeting to know our problems to include in the policy, I would have been glad to join the meeting and share my problems. The government should call for a meeting irrespective of our illiteracy, know our problems, and include in the policy.*

*Kokor: I want to be able to share my thought on issues concerning farming activities in my community*

*Milli: They should meet us and give us the chance to share our views and we can let them know our problems we are facing as farmers so that if there is any help, they can provide us. They would attend to it, which would help to increase our productivity.*

The above women were most concerned about increasing access to productive resources as stressed in the other section of this thesis. The majority of the female farmers were reliant on the government for resources provision; therefore, these four women would have contributed to the policy document by sharing their problems to facilitate their productivity.

Furthermore, two female farmers and five stakeholders highlighted that the government officials should seek for women's views and suggestions when formulating agriculture policies. The women explained that they would share their views and give suggestions pertaining to what is being discussed during meetings. The women further stressed that the government officials should listen and make use of their views and suggestions since the majority of the female farmers were not educated. The five stakeholders supported the farmers' suggestions that women could be involved in the formulation of agriculture policies actively when the stakeholders go to most farmers to seek and listen to farmers' views and suggestions regarding the policy. The stakeholders stressed that they would present reports to the municipal head for further discussion at the regional level.

Again, three participants also suggested that leaders of the FBOs should represent farmers in municipal meetings during policymaking discussions. Specifically, a stakeholder among these participants explained that farmers or female farmers could discuss their problems at the grassroots level and the leaders would represent the farmers at municipal meetings. Most of the women's views could be part of the decision-making at municipal in this regard. Emefa's said:

*The active participation by farmers in this farmer-based organization will be an easier way for farmers to be included in the formulation of such policy. The cocoa board is saying that they will not use chief farmers to represent farmers anymore. However, we should form groups and allow the leaders to represent all the farmers in case farmers need support from the government hence they will deal directly with the organization. The government should involve this*

*farmer-based organization by consulting the leaders of this organization who can represent all the farmers in the community. Formulation of the farmer-based organization is now a policy by the government where farmers have to join a group before getting resources. Therefore, we are trying to get the organization registered before we can get available resources. What I mean is that the leaders represent farmers at the municipal or community level and discuss their problems and suggestions there. The government cannot go to individual farmers, but the organization's leaders will be a mouthpiece for all farmers of this community and with that women and farmers, in general, would have been involved in the formulation of policy.*

Another suggestion made by the participants to enhance the active participation of women in the formulation of the agriculture policies was to provide adequate resources for both agriculture stakeholders and farmers. According to the majority of the stakeholders, inadequate provision of resources from the government was a major factor hindering their ability to access all communities in the municipality. In this regard, the provision of resources by the national authorities would help the Municipal Assembly to function effectively and be able to include the majority of women in policymaking discussions at their communities and Municipal Assembly. One stakeholder from one of the farmer-based organizations argued that there were not enough extension officers at the Municipal Assembly; hence, one extension officer had to work in many communities. For this reason, the extension officers were not able to have meetings in all these communities since they did not have adequate resources like funds and transport to do so. Therefore, the provision of funds, transport and employing more extension officers will facilitate the participation of women in the formulation of agriculture policies.

In conclusion, the national authorities or policy makers should formulate strategies to include the majority of female farmers in the formulation of agriculture policies in the future by providing adequate resources to municipal officials to operate effectively. The resources will enable the officials to have more meetings in the communities to solicit views, suggestions, and problems facing female farmers. The information gathered from the local farmers can be

discussed at the Municipal Assembly with stakeholders' consultations including leaders from FBOs representing farmers. In addition, there should be meetings for men and women separately in some communities as well as at the Municipal Assembly. Separate meetings will enable women who are facing cultural issues to be able to contribute extensively.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Discussion and Conclusions**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, I discuss my research findings as highlighted in chapter four with a focus on answering my research questions. Particularly, I explore the involvement of women in decision-making in their households, communities, FBOs, and municipal assembly to examine their inclusion in agriculture policymaking at different levels. Furthermore, I discuss the factors hindering women's active involvement in both agricultural decision-making and policymaking in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality. I compare my results with existing literature as emphasized in my literature review to identify consistencies or differences in my research findings with other scholars. I explore recommendations from the respondents to facilitate the active involvement of women to participate in agricultural decision-making and policymaking in the Municipality.

#### **5.2 Involvement of Women in Agriculture Decision-Making**

According to Ashwini et al. (2018), decision-making is part of people's lives, which enhances their development and agricultural development. My research identified that the majority of women participate in decision-making in their households, communities, and the FBOs to which they belong. Indeed, the farmwomen have a voice to speak up during discussions and participate significantly in decision-making. The decision-making processes in the three environments incorporates female farmers who bring ideas together to formulate strategies to resolve their production problems. Some of the strategies include joint decisions, joining farmers' groups, and registering FBOs to access more resources from the government. Therefore, the majority of the female farmers contribute to decision-making in different areas in their localities and are able to formulate strategies towards desired outcomes. The desired actions of



most of the rural women have enabled them to attain some self-help support to access some resources without the government's involvement. However, at the municipal assembly, which serves as the governing body of the Ejisu-Juaben Municipality as well as the place where policy discussions take place, the majority of women do not have a voice and do not participate in these decision-making discussions. Women's participation in the municipal assembly continues to be met with barriers that hinder farmwomen from participating in agricultural policymaking in the municipality. My findings are discussed in greater detail below.

#### *5.2.1 Voice in the Households*

According to Quaye et al. (2016), factors such as “religion, culture, position in the household and relative economic power” affect decision-making with respect to production of resources and farm activities (p.6). My research findings confirm Quaye et al. (2016) results that culture and religion influence some women's decision-making power in their households in Muslim communities in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality. Specifically, the key informants in my research highlighted that most women in Muslim communities especially do not participate in decision-making in their household and even in their communities due to the culture and religious reasons. This is consistent with findings from Seymour and Peterman (2018), that women in Muslim communities move by the directives of their husbands; hence, give their husband full responsibility to make decisions for the household as heads in any aspect of their life including agriculture decisions. Additionally, one female farmer (who was not Muslim) was affected by culture where her husband controls the decision-making in her household. In contrast, the other women participating in the study felt they had a voice in decision-making but lacked economic power to act on final decisions made in their household. Generally, the non-

Muslim female respondents' participation in day-to-day agriculture is extensive and they have a voice in agricultural decision-making in their households.

Quaye et al. (2016) argued that women participate less in decision-making regarding production resources and other needs. My research findings contrast with Quaye et al.'s results that were based on research in Volta and Brong-Ahafo Regions of Ghana. Particularly, I identified that, most women in the three communities in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality are more engaged in decision-making in their households regarding farm activities (production) and production resources. Quaye et al.'s (2016) findings also emphasised that women participate more in domestic activities; while this was true for my study participants, they balanced domestic activities with agricultural activities. Women in Ejisu-Juaben decide to produce cash crops to earn more income to fulfil their domestic roles in their households. In addition, some of the participants are responsible for all the financial needs of their children since they are single mothers. It is also important to note that the majority of women decide to produce food crops for subsistence purposes to provide for their households.

My research findings can be compared to results in other communities in developing countries. For instance, research conducted by Susheela et al. (1991) highlighted that rural women participate less in the household decisions pertaining to the purchase of agriculture inputs in India. On the contrary, a study in Uganda suggested that both men and women have little difference in terms of the level of participation in agriculture household decision-making regarding the type of crop to plant, the type of inputs to use, etc. (production) (Twyman & Deere, 2015). My research is more consistent with Twyman and Deere's findings. The responses from the female farmers indicate that there is little difference regarding their participation in decision-making with their male counterparts in their households.

The main kinds of decision-making women in the study reported were in relation to access to production assets and farm activities; this is consistent with ethnographic research conducted by Quaye et al. (2016). Additionally, Ragsdale et al. (2018) research took place in the Northern Region of Ghana and highlighted the kinds of decision-making women participate in including the sale of productive assets such as farmland, animals, and farm equipment. My research respondents did not emphasise making farm decisions regarding the sale of productive assets but rather discuss the buying of production resources like farm implements. The majority of my research respondents participate extensively in decision-making regarding these types of agriculture decisions in their households with their spouses.

Most of the rural women claimed they make the day-to-day agriculture decision jointly with their spouses in their households. My research findings shed light on the gendered dynamics of decision-making in the household found by Seymour and Peterman (2018). According to the researchers, solely men make most of the decision-making in the households, but a small number of women make decisions alone and, in some cases, jointly with their male counterparts. Indeed, my research participants argued that women need to make agricultural decisions with their husbands to get some access to resources from their husbands for their farm activities, which confirms the same factors identified by Seymour and Peterman (2018). Joint decisions happened in the households due to inadequate resources; hence, both men and women need to make decisions to share the available resources (Seymour & Peterman, 2018). For instance, there were 94.8 percent of agricultural land owned solely by men, 5.2 percent were owned solely by women, and less than 1 percent were jointly owned by both men and women in Ghana (Oduro, 2017). On the other hand, in my case study, the majority of women have access to land but lack access to farm inputs like credit, implements and seedlings; hence they make joint decisions to

access some inputs, but resources are inadequate most of the time. The majority of the female farmers argued that they have equal voice in decision-making in their households but not equal resources. Therefore, farmwomen make decisions jointly with their husbands to get support from their husbands by sharing resources or contributing money to buy farm inputs. Also, culturally, married men are responsible for the financial needs of their spouses in the households in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality. For this reason, married men are socially responsible to support their wives with agriculture resources; hence, the women need to make decisions with their husbands. Furthermore, the majority of the respondents are from the Akan tribe where culture directs them to make decisions with their husbands as a form of respect and a custom to follow in the household. The majority of the women confirmed that they have a voice in their household and their husbands do not sideline their views during decision-making discussions. Therefore, culture of deferring to men outside the home does not negatively influence women's participation in their day-to-day agriculture decision-making in their households. Most of the female respondents are empowered to contribute to decision-making in their household, but they sometimes relied on their husband's resources to transform those decisions into desired outcomes.

Few women make agriculture decisions by themselves and for themselves in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality, which is consistent with Seymour and Peterman's (2018) research results. Single women act independently to access some production resources and resolve some production issues. These women mentioned inadequate resources as their main challenge, to transforming their choices into desired outcomes.

### *5.2.2 Active in Communities*

The majority of women participate in decision-making in their communities to get access to resources since they lack production inputs for their farm activities. Secondary data used by

Amu (2005) revealed that women are vulnerable in terms of access to production resources. Additionally, according to research conducted in four regions in Ghana (Northern, Ashanti, Brong-Ahafo and Volta Region), many women in those regions are challenged with a lack of access to production resources. In my research, I confirmed the findings from the two researchers. Duncan (1997) and Amu (2004) explained that women lack production resources about education, land acquisition, agriculture extension services, and access to credit. Furthermore, numerous works of literature from scholars (Agarwal 2003; Deere and Doss 2006; Deere et al. 2012; Doss et al. 2008; Doss 2013) have demonstrated that women struggle to acquire land for farming. On the contrary, I found that the women respondents have inadequate access to education, credits, agrochemicals, and farm implements, but not a lack of access to land and extension services as stressed by Duncan (1997) and Amu (2004). Most of the rural women have access to land through inheritance in my study area. Quaye et al. (2016) stressed that land in Ghana traditionally belongs to local leaders like chiefs as well as families; hence, it can be owned by another person through lease, gift, share farming, and inheritance. Quaye et al. (2016) found that most women respondents own their land. Regarding the extension services, the government provides training programs to farmers including female farmers but not resources. Thus, the programs treat women as lacking knowledge rather than addressing their resource needs. However, according to the respondents, the programs help them to reduce production cost, such as planting in lines, to increase farm yields. Therefore, female farmers strategize means to get access to productive resources by taking part in decision-making in their communities.

Many of the rural women argued that community leaders do not provide enough decision-making meetings in the communities. Therefore, the women felt there are not enough

community meetings to address most of their agriculture issues collectively. The women further explained that there are one or two meetings in a year for decision-making in the three communities visited. Additionally, I revealed that the major decisions discussed during community meetings are access to productive resources, specifically agrochemicals, and strategies to access more resources. Nevertheless, most of my literature reviews from scholars did not highlight the frequency of community meetings as well as kinds of decisions that took place in their communities.

Regardless of the limited number of meeting times available in their communities, the female respondents participate significantly in any kind of decision-making. The majority of the women believe that participating in community meetings will enable the government to know about their grievances and provide them with needed resources. Precisely, the lack of adequate resources influences women to join and participate in community discussions actively. The majority of the women revealed that they have a voice; hence, they share their ideas without anyone sidelining their views during the decision-making discussions. On the contrary, research by scholars such as Ragsdale et al. (2018) and Quaye et al. (2016) indicated that most of the women respondents in Northern, Brong-Ahafo, and Volta Regions have low participation in agriculture decision-making. A study conducted in India, shows that the participation of women in agriculture decision-making was very low in these regions (Ashwini et al., 2018; Susheela et al., 1991). My findings provide a more nuanced view of women's participation in community decision-making processes and outcomes.

The key informants in the study argued that most women from Islamic communities have low participation in their agriculture decision-making in the municipality because of cultural and religious factors. My research findings indicate that in general women in Islamic communities in

Ghana who are married do not participate actively in agriculture decision-making; however, women in non-Islamic communities participate more actively. Supporting this claim, I was not able to recruit participants from Muslim communities since the women were busy tending to their domestic roles. The other communities I visited were non-Muslim communities and that might inform their active participation in decision-making in their communities (Quaye et al., 2016). The key informants stressed that women in Muslim locations are responsible for most domestic roles and are not allowed to leave their roles to participate in any form of community meetings. Also, women will need to seek permission from their spouses to join community meetings when there are no domestic roles. The stakeholders suggested these women do not express themselves freely since they do not have much confidence and are disempowered in their households. Therefore, culture and religion influence agriculture decision-making in these communities. These findings are consistent with some scholars' work, which highlighted that religion, culture, literacy, locality, tribe, and economic background influence changes in gender roles (Kritz & Makinwa-Adebusoye, 1999; Torri & Martinez, 2011; Willy & Holm-Muller, 2013). Decision-making is part of the roles both men and women played. Therefore, feminists and scholars should focus on research that will rectify cultural factors particularly to facilitate the active participation of women in decision-making in their communities and households.

In addition, I acknowledged that workload and type of crops were the factors affecting a few women from participating in agriculture decision-making in my study areas. Indeed, some women are engaged in both domestic roles and farm activities; hence, they do not have enough time to participate in decision-making in the community. Insufficient time hindering women's active participation in decision-making was also identified by Ashwini et al. (2018) in their research work in India. Additionally, the respondents stressed that participation in community

decision-making is restricted to cash crop farmers but not food crop producers; therefore, the women do not get the opportunity to engage in decision-making in the community because they are engaged in only food crop production. Among the other factors identified in India by Ashwini et al. (2018) is access to mass media, lack of access to extension services, insufficient time, illiteracy, and large family size of households; however, my study participants did not mention these problems in relation to participating in decision-making at the community level in Ejisu- Juaben Municipality.

In conclusion, the participation of women in decision-making in their communities is very extensive and the women participate actively. However, there are no policy discussions at the community level since none of the respondents confirmed participating in any decision-making relating to any policy in their communities. Precisely, the municipal assembly officials do not discuss any action plans with the rural women at the community levels but only consult them to distribute agrochemicals or facilitate training programs or major projects.

### *5.2.3 Participating in Farmer-Based Organisations*

According to Asante et al. (2011), FBOs in recent times amplify the views of their members through various media as well as play a vital role in local development planning and agriculture development. Salifu et al. (2010) highlighted that there are about 10,000 local FBOs in Ghana consisting of approximately 350,000 farmers in 2010. The statistics by Salifu et al. (2010) might exclude non-registered organizations since only registered organizations are documented by the government as stressed by my research respondents. These farmers' organizations enable farmers to organize themselves (self-help groups) to access productive resources such as land and capital and help narrow gender gaps concerning access to productive resources where women are marginalized in most cases. In addition, the FBO is an easier



medium through which policymaking or decision-making at the national level can include farmers at the grassroots level. Nevertheless, I revealed that FBO is not a medium through which farmers participate in policymaking or decision-making at the government level, but a means to get access to production resources. Indeed, farmers joining FBOs in my study areas reported it was a way to address some of their problems.

Particularly, many of my participants have made the decision to join FBOs to get access to production resources, especially agrochemicals and credit from the government. Another factor that encourages some female farmers to join FBOs is the ability to get farm support from other members such as labor; hence, the organizations enable women to be more productive in their activities. There is scant literature on FBOs in Ghana and the available body of literature focuses less on women with regards to factors that encourage women to join farmer groups. For instance, research conducted by Asante et al. (2011) aimed to identify the factors that determine farmers' willingness to join FBOs in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The researchers highlighted 39 FBOs but focused on 20 organizations; however, they did not categorize the organizations based on gender. In other words, the researchers did not specify the number of organizations, which are mainly men, mainly women or joint. Asante et al. (2011) again argued that men are more likely to join FBOs than women. However, most of my research respondents belong to joint FBOs whilst few women belong to female-only groups in their communities. Particularly, the female farmers I interviewed have the interest to join FBOs just as their male counterparts since almost half of the group members in joint groups are women. Certainly, Asante et al. (2011) identified some factors that empower farmers to join FBOs including farm size, access to credit, access to machinery, and farmers' income (see section 2.4.1 for details). Some of the factors I identified are consistent with Asante et al. (2011) such as inadequate resources (credit).

Some women do not have access to join an FBO in their community because there is no FBO established in their community. Quantitative research that occurred in Lithuania by Raišienė et al. (2018) contrasts my findings. According to the researchers many farmers, including women in Lithuania, do not belong to any organization. The researchers did not specify the percentage of women who do not belong to an organization, but the research included both men and women. From the three communities I visited in the municipality, one community does not have an FBO, but the remaining two communities have numerous FBOs. The women explained that female farmers could join any FBO in the municipality, but access is strictly for cocoa producers. The key informants added that the farmer groups are to bring all cocoa farmers together and participate actively in decision-making to access agrochemicals and other resources from the government.

Most of the women respondents participate extensively in agriculture decision-making in their FBOs in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality. However, Raišienė et al.'s (2018) research results are different from what I found. The scholars contended that women due to other responsibilities (domestic and economic roles) might not have as much interest to participate in the FBOs as their male counterparts. My research finding demonstrates that women in Ghana do have an interest in, and see the value of, FBOs. Other scholars in Ghana, such as Asante et al. (2011) as well as Salifu and Funk (2012), did not focus on women's participation in decision-making within FBOs. Indeed, there is little research on FBOs in Ghana and other developing countries and even less focus on women specifically. I cannot draw many parallels with their discussions regarding the participation of women in the organizations' decision-making.

The majority of the women do not have the challenge to participate in decision-making in their FBOs; however, one woman faced some challenge contributing to the organization's

decision-making. The main factor hindering the women's active participation is financial constraints as consistent with Salifu and Funk's (2012) findings of gender in general. The respondent in my study explained that organizations pull out money to function, but she will not go to meetings and participate in decision-making since she does not have enough income to pay the membership fees. Generally, the participation of women in their farmers' group is very extensive and can enable them to be more effective and efficient in their farm activities.

In my research, the women participate in numerous discussions in the organizations, but the main kind of decision-making discussions are centered on the strategies to access productive resources. The participants further explained that members of the organization discuss plans to register the organizations to access production resources. According to the rural women, the government will recognize their output and provide adequate agrochemicals when their organizations are registered. Also, the women stressed that recently, the government does not provide agrochemicals to individual farmers but only through FBOs. Most farmers are motivated to join and participate in all discussions in FBOs due to the policy made by the government regarding the distribution of resources. The farmers support one another in the organization through labor support and pull resources together.

In sum, the establishment of FBOs is encouraged by many governments to enable farmers to access production resources like credit (Shiferaw et al., 2011). Bernard et al. (2008) also emphasised that the formation of FBOs is gaining national recognition and are mentioned in national development policy in some territories. FBO enables the female respondents to pull out funds to resolve some of their development issues; hence, the establishment of FBOs can enhance the capacity building of rural women for higher productivity. Additionally, farmers can act as pressure groups to access production resources and form collateral for-credit opportunities.

Certainly, the participation of female farmers in the FBOs is more extensive than previously thought (Salifu & Funk, 2012; Raišienė et al., 2018). However, according to the respondents, there are no policy discussions among members in any of the organizations in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality. The organization can serve as a medium through which the majority of women can participate in the decision-making at the national level or policymaking in Ghana. Specifically, the groups can be represented by their leaders after members' discussion or decision-making at the grassroots level. The government of Ghana or municipal officials should enforce strategies to promote and involve FBOs in all communities through their leaders to enhance equity and high involvement in agriculture policy formulations.

#### *5.2.4 Unable to Participate Equitably in Municipal Assembly*

The district or municipal assemblies are the highest administrative bodies at the local level of governance in Ghana as part of the decentralization process (Baah et al., 2005; Boateng et al., 2015). They are responsible for the overall growth of the municipality; hence, they are responsible to provide services, facilitate democracy, and development at the grassroots levels. Tagoe and Abakah (2015) further indicated that the district assemblies serve as a channel through which women participate in decision-making at the national level. Therefore, the municipal or district assemblies need to ensure higher and equitable participation of local people in the communities (Government of Ghana, 2002). Women have the right to be actively and equitably involved in decision-making or the local governance process since they are Ghanaians and are part of communities (Baah-Ennumh et al., 2005).

Key informants in the study confirmed that including women in the decision-making process enables the officials to make good decisions and plans for successful implementation. Also, involving the women in the decision-making at the government level will allow the

officials to know the prioritized problems faced by the majority of women. However, my study found few farmwomen are involved in decision-making at the municipal assembly. The key informants explained that some farmers, including women, are consulted in their communities to partake in decision-making at the municipal assembly, but few communities are visited.

According to the stakeholders, during these consultations, farmers' grievances and progress are discussed, and reports are written regarding the discussions. These reports are submitted for further deliberation during the stakeholders' meeting at the assembly. One means by which farmers participate in decision-making is through the reports represented on their behalf by municipal officers. Such reports focus on common issues. In addition, a minimum of 30 percent of women are mandated to be present during decision-making at the municipal assembly. The key informants further emphasized that women's representation can be more than 30 percent of participants, but the lowest proportion should be 30 percent of women including female farmers. The women participate in discussions concerning action plans, farmers' problems, medium-term plans, and policies from the top authorities. In spite of these measures, the majority of the key informants argued that women's involvement in municipal meetings is low as compared to their male counterparts.

I also observed that the majority of municipal assembly's officials or leaders are men, and few are women. These findings confirm the argument that some scholars and feminists (Baah-Ennumh et al., 2005; Bauer & Britton, 2006; Boateng et al., 2015; Duncan, 2004; Ofei-Aboagye, 2015; Tagoe & Abakah, 2015, Owusu, & Kokor, 2005; GSS, 2012; Tsikata, 2009, Yobo, 2012a) made for women's participation in leadership positions in the district or municipal assemblies in Ghana. Scholars typically focus on women's participation in elected leadership positions in the district or municipal assemblies in Ghana; hence, they underlined that the

number of female leaders/officials elected at the district or municipal assemblies is lower than their male counterparts. Female leaders at the municipal assembly can influence the participation of women at the grassroots level. Indeed, when there are more women leaders at the municipal assembly, the participation of women in decision-making will be higher and will facilitate the higher participation of women at the community levels and vice versa. The factors identified by the scholars regarding women's low participation in leadership positions are patriarchal culture, a lack of confidence, financial constraints, domestic roles, and education (Baah-Ennumh et al., 2005; Bauer & Britton, 2006). There are several challenges stressed by the stakeholders regarding the low participation of women in decision-making at Ejisu Juaben Municipality.

#### *5.2.4.1 Challenges hindering effective women's active involvement in municipal assembly decisions*

The main factors hindering women's participation in decision-making at the municipal assembly-level are culture, inadequate resources (human resources, farm implements, and agrochemicals as well as credit), high level of illiteracy, and organisational/representational barriers. The majority of female respondents are illiterate and lack confidence in their ability to participate in municipal assembly discussions. The stakeholders explained that the discussions at the municipal level sometimes use the English language; therefore, English proficiency and illiteracy limit women to participation in such meetings. The municipal assembly invites female farmers who are educated to participate in their decision-making. Tagoe and Abakah (2015) also identified that it is worth noting that women who participate actively are highly educated and have high levels of confidence. In contrast, illiterate women do not participate actively in decision-making since they do not have the confidence to voice their ideas in male-dominated discussions in most cases (Tagoe & Abakah, 2015). Therefore, since the majority of my research

participants are illiterate, they indicated that they would not be welcome to participate in decision-making at the municipal assembly level.

Secondly, many rural women are unable to participate in agriculture decision-making at the municipal level due to inadequate resources. I found that there is an inadequate number of extension officers and other officers at the municipal assembly to visit all communities in the municipality to include most women in the municipal decision-making process. For instance, one extension officer serves more than two communities instead of one. The few officials are not given adequate resources such as transport and funds to reach out to most women in their zones. These problems create barriers for women in most communities to be involved in municipal assembly decision-making.

Furthermore, there are inadequate numbers of female officials at the municipal assemblies to participate in their decision-making process; consequently, the women leaders' participation in decision-making can be affected negatively. Tagoe and Abakah (2015) research showed that when women leaders increased, there is a likelihood of an increase in their participation. For instance, in 2015 the number of female leaders in district assemblies increased, which influences their ability to participate in decision-making during meetings actively (Tagoe & Abakah, 2015). Still, some scholars (Baah Ennumh et al, 2005; Offei-Boateng et al, 2000) raised concerns regarding inadequate resources as a factor hindering women's participation; however, the participants of my study raised different concerns. The scholars argued that women do not have adequate resources to contest for leadership positions, but my concern is centered on the government not employing more female leaders/officials at the municipal or district assemblies. According to the key informants, the majority of leaders and officers are employed but not elected, including those I interviewed in the assembly. When more agriculture officers

are employed at the local government, more officials will be able to consult most rural women in their communities to include their views in administrative decision-making.

I observed that rural women are faced with inadequate resources and that is their main priority. For this reason, when women are invited for municipal meetings or consulted in their communities to discuss important matters of the organization, they focus mostly on addressing this essential issue instead of other policy issues. Therefore, inadequate resources hinder women's more active participation in the decision-making process.

Thirdly, culture plays a vital role in women's active participation in administrative decision-making. Most of the stakeholders are limited to visiting some communities during the decision-making process due to cultural factors. Those stakeholders explained that in Muslim communities, it is very difficult to involve the majority of rural women because their spouses do not allow them to participate in those decisions. Traditionally, married women submit to their husbands in most Muslim homes, and the men decide on behalf of the household. According to the key informants, the rural women in those communities do not have confidence; therefore, this affects their active participation in their decision-making discussions even when permitted by their spouses.

Lastly, a lack of grounded representation or effective representation is another factor hindering women's active participation in decision-making in the municipal assembly. According to some key informants, they select a 30 percent minimum of women to participate in their decision-making process. The stakeholders explained that the selected women need to be educated and selected randomly among the farmers. The stakeholders do not use women's representatives or FBOs. According to the FBO's leaders interviewed, they do not represent their members at the municipal assembly meetings, but the extension officers represent farmers. This



barrier prevents many women's views to be heard since the extension officers summarise all grievances and ideas of many communities in the form of a report. The extension officers are not farmers but represent the municipal assembly at the community level; therefore, they do not serve as a representative of farmers. There is an organizational/representation barrier at the municipal assembly level to include all organizational representatives, especially the FBO's in the communities; hereafter, hindering the majority of women to participate in administrative decision-making in the municipality.

In conclusion, the majority of women face barriers to participate in decision-making at the municipal assembly-level due to factors such as culture, inadequate resources, a lack of appropriate representation, and low levels of education. The barriers to participation in municipal assembly's discussions hinder women from being involved in the policymaking in the municipality since policies are only discussed at the municipal assembly level.

### **5.3. Low Involvement of women in the formulation of agriculture policymaking (FASDEP II)**

The participation of ordinary people in policymaking has raised the interest of some academic studies in the western countries since beneficiary's participation is associated with the implementation of good policies (Beierle 1999; Petts, 2001; Irvin & Stansbury; 2004 cited in Santos et al., 2006). FASDEP II is the current agriculture policy being implemented in Ghana by the municipal/district assemblies with the aim to improve the situation of all kinds of farmers, especially the vulnerable producers, through an extensive stakeholder consultation process (MOFA, 2007). MOFA further stressed that one of the broad principles of the policy is to ensure all sub-policies and programs are formulated from a gender perspective to enhance the government's gender equality in the agricultural sector. In most cases, this principle is implementable in theory but not successfully implemented in practice.

In my research, I found that the majority of women were not involved in the formulation of the agriculture policy, but a few women felt they were involved in the establishment of the policy. The women who felt they participated were not actively involved in the design of the policy. They shared their problems with government officials but had no other interaction with the formulation of the policy. In addition, some key informants confirmed that women were not very involved in the formulation of the policy since rural women only shared their problems during community meetings. Some of the stakeholders stressed that farmers' grievances are presented to the local institution in the form of a report for further discussions. Women's concerns are not separately reported by the officers; however, the officials present a general report including both men's and women's issues. Generally, the participation of women in the formulation of FASDEP was low. These findings are reflected in research conducted in Ethiopia by Ariti et al., (2018). Even though Ariti et al. (2018) focused less on women, they indicated that farmers' participation in agriculture policies like land-use policies is very low as emphasized by both the farmers and local institutions. According to the researchers, there had been several scholars (Booth and Halseth, 2011; Irvin and Stansbury, 2004; Chirenje et al., 2013; Mauerhofer, 2016 and Neef, 2008) from different continents like Latin America, North America, Africa, Asia, and Europe who researched agriculture policies, but focused less on farmers and local governments' participation in the policy design. Indeed, there are few studies regarding women's participation in agriculture policies in most countries including Ghana. More research is needed on women's participation in policymaking.

#### *5.3.1 Challenges Affecting Women's Involvement in Policymaking*

There were several factors stressed by both stakeholders and female farmers about why women were not involved in the formulation of the agriculture policy. Particularly, the same

barriers hindering women's participation at municipal assemblies play a role in preventing women from being involved in the agriculture policymaking in the municipality. Thus, policy discussions are done at the municipal assembly level and women can participate when they are given the opportunity. The factors I found include a high level of illiteracy, culture, inadequate resources, representation barriers, and a lack of good communication.

The low level of education of the majority of women in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality hindered their active participation in the formulation of the agriculture policy. For instance, some respondents claimed they were not involved in the establishment of the policy since they do not have high levels of education. The key informants also confirmed that participation in policymaking discussions at the municipal assembly is restricted to educated farmers.

Because the majority of FBOs are not registered, this hinders women from being involved, through local collectives in policy formulation. Some rural women highlighted that they did not get the opportunity to participate in the establishment of the agriculture policy since their farmers' groups are not registered. The women further explained that the local government only recognized registered FBOs in the municipality and include those organizations in policymaking but not the unregistered organizations. The FBOs require money to be registered by the government officials in the municipality.

Inadequate resources such as agriculture professionals and funds limit women's participation in agriculture policymaking. The number of professionals at the local government or municipal assembly is few, especially the number of women; hence affecting the involvement of most women at their zone in the policymaking process. When female leaders are few at the administrative level, there is a likelihood of bias in decision-making, and the process does not

facilitate equity and gender mainstreaming. Indeed, the few professionals do not get adequate resources like transport to visit most women in their communities.

Again, the same cultural barriers at work at the community level play a role in preventing women from participating in the establishment of FASDEP II. According to the key informants, culture in terms of gender prevents the majority of women in some Muslim communities to participate in any community discussions including policymaking since they are prevented by their husbands from participating. The husbands in some cases seek to know the content of discussions before allowing their spouses to be involved in discussions in their communities.

Additionally, the majority of women were not involved in the formulation of the policy due to a lack of good communication between the farmers and the local government. Both the rural women and the municipal officers explained that women are consulted at the community level to discuss farmers' issues and concerns. However, the government officials do not specify the goals of their discussions since some women argued that they have not heard any information regarding any policy in their communities but participate in government meetings in the community. Also, most of the women indicated that they go to meetings to get access to agrochemicals, and to discuss their problems with the government officials; however, there had not been any policy discussions in those meetings. Again, the farmers argued that their issues are not reported by government officials to the decision-makers leading to their inadequate resource provision by the government. The stakeholders also claim they present reports on behalf of farmers to the top government for policy and decision-making. These findings are consistent with what Ariti et al. (2018) identified in Ethiopia that there is a lack of communication from higher levels to local authorities in Ethiopia. According to the researchers, the farmers claim they were not involved, but the local government argues that farmers were involved in the design of

the agriculture policy. Therefore, there is a lack of good communication between the farmers and the local government in that regard.

In sum, women play a vital role in agriculture in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality (see section 4.2 for details); they have the right to be involved in any decision regarding their livelihood such as agriculture policies. The participation of local people ensures unbiased, good decisions to be implemented, and provides opportunities for the beneficiaries to make choices and prioritize needs (Ariti et al., 2018). According to scholars (example, Adger et al., 2018; Blackstock & Richards, 2007; & Wesselink et al, 2011), participation enhances good policies through the combination of local ideas and skilled knowledge. National governments should strengthen strategies to facilitate inclusion of women in policymaking in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality in Ghana.

#### **5.4 Recommendations to Enhance Active Participation in Local Governance and Policymaking**

The majority of women respondents are willing to participate actively in policymaking as well as local governance decisions in the municipality. The female respondents and the key informants made some recommendations to enhance their participation:

- **Provision of adequate resources:** The government of Ghana should provide adequate resources (such as officers, funds, and transport) for the agriculture stakeholders at the municipal assembly to operate effectively. Precisely, the national authorities should employ more human resources at the local level of governance and provide some needed resources to the government officials to support the activities of female farmers. When there are adequate resources provided to institutions and ordinary people, many women can participate in policymaking. For instance, if rural women are provided with fertilizer when they need fertilizer, they will feel heard and they will be able to contribute to

discussions on other issues. Additionally, there can be government officials available in most communities to include the majority of women in their zones with regards to policymaking meetings when enough resources are supplied to the officials. Thus, women's views and ideas will be collected and summarised in the form of a report for administrative purposes.

- **Informal education promotion:** Women need informal education about taking records of their farm products. This education can be in a form of training by the government officials to enable illiterate farmers to take basic records of their farm output in their respective farms. The training will facilitate easy documentation of female farmers' output by the local level and central level of government to recognize the active roles of women in the agriculture sector. There is the need to develop a culturally appropriate means of engaging with Muslim women and their husbands.
- **Strengthening organizational structures:** Generally, female farmers are poor and make a livelihood through agriculture. Therefore, the government should support the registration of FBOs financially. The majority of FBOs are not registered and not recognized by the government. Undeniably, the FBOs' leaders can represent the majority of female farmers at the municipal assembly meetings. Additionally, the municipal assembly should strengthen its stakeholders' structure by including FBOs' representatives during policy and decision-making discussions.
- **Effective coordination and communication:** From observation, I recommend that there should be good coordination and communication between the municipal assembly and female farmers. Female farmers should be knowledgeable about the objectives and goals of meetings organized by the municipal assembly. The local government should provide

adequate information to women regarding policies, programs, projects, and action plans and explain the importance of women's contributions to the meeting.

### **5.5. Limitations**

The following are the limitations I encountered when conducting my research:

- The selection of three communities in the municipality will not allow for generalization of results to the whole municipality or country. However, my project is a case of a selected number of people in the three communities to provide credible explanations of the phenomenon studied within particular contexts of those communities. More research is needed to examine the transferability of my findings to other areas.
- Interview conversations were translated from the local language to English during data collection. As a Ghanaian, I was able to do the translation myself; however, it is possible that some of the meaning the participants were trying to convey was not adequately captured in English. This is a challenge commonly associated with translation (Howitt & Stevens, 2016). However, I used similar construction of words to maintain the same meaning of their responses.
- I could not involve women from Muslim communities since no one showed up after the community announcement. The majority of the women were undertaking domestic roles in their households.

### **5.6. Conclusion**

The majority of women respondents participate in the process of decision-making in their homes, communities, and FBOs. The women contribute to decision-making by sharing their views and ideas massively. Factors such as a lack of power to access productive resources and culture direct women to make a decision together with their spouses at the household level. The

few women who are not able to participate actively in their household's decisions faced cultural barriers in relation to patriarchal household norms. Secondly, the participation of female farmers in the FBOs is more extensive than previously thought, but financial constraints limit a woman from participating in higher-level decision-making forums. Some participants argued that culture, high workload, and type of crop production hamper women's participation at the community level.

Most rural women face barriers to participate in decision-making at the municipal assembly-level due to factors such as culture, inadequate resources, organisational/representational barriers, and low level of education. The barriers to participation in municipal assembly's/local government discussions hinder women from being directly involved in the policymaking. Regarding the policy formulation, I revealed that many women were not involved in the formulation of FASDEP II in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality. Among the factors that hamper women's active involvement in the policy establishment include high level of illiteracy, culture, inadequate resources, organisational/representational barriers, and a lack of good communication.

Indeed, women need to participate actively in policymaking in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality. According to scholars (Adger et al., 2003; Blackstock & Richards, 2007; Wesselink et al., 2011) participation enhances good policies through the combination of local ideas and skilled knowledge.

The suggestions made by the participants to enhance female farmers' participation in policymaking include the promotion of informal education, adequate resources provision by the national government for community consultation, strengthening organizational structures as well as effective coordination and communication between government officials and rural farmers.



These interventions can promote empowerment among farmwomen; therefore, they will be able to contribute effectively in decision-making and policymaking and transform their ideas into desired action plans. These interventions can facilitate gender equity since there will be fair inclusion of women in policymaking and results in gender equality in the long run. Thus, there can be a sustainable agriculture development to enhance food security in Ghana.

In sum, the participation of women in policymaking is low especially in rural areas of Ghana. This study emphasised the factors hindering farm women (women at the grassroots level) from being involved in the policy formulation; however, there is little literature with respect to the factors affecting the national authorities from involving local farmers during the policy establishment. Therefore, my research will need further research to examine the factors affecting the policymakers to include rural women actively in policymaking in the municipality.

Addressing the challenges from both the local farmers and the policymakers' point of view regarding inclusion of women in policymaking can facilitate successful implementation of agricultural policies to improve the livelihood of rural women in Ghana.

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## List of Appendices

### Appendix A: BUREC Letter of Approval and Certificates





## Brandon University Research Ethics Committee (BUREC) Ethics Certificate for Research Involving Human Participants

The Brandon University Research Ethics Committee (BUREC) has reviewed and approved this ethics proposal in accordance with the current Tri-Council Policy Statement: *Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2-2014)*, the *Brandon University Policy on Research Involving Humans*, and the *Brandon University Research Ethics Committee (BUREC) Policies and Procedures*.

This approval is subject to the following conditions:

1. Approval is granted only for the research and purposes as described in the ethics application.
2. Ethics Certification is valid for up to five (5) years from the date approved, pending receipt of Annual Progress Reports. As per *BUREC Policies and Procedures*, Section 6.0, "At a minimum, continuing ethics research review shall consist of an Annual Report for multi-year projects and a Final Report at the end of all projects... Failure to fulfill the continuing research ethics review requirements is considered an act of non-compliance and may result in the suspension of active ethics certification; refusal to review and approve any new research ethics submission, and/or others as outlined in Section 10.0".
3. Any changes made to the protocol must be reported to the BUREC prior to implementation. See *BUREC Policies and Procedures* for more detail.
4. Any deviations to the research or adverse events must be submitted to the BUREC as soon as possible.

As per *BUREC Policies and Procedures*, Section 10.0, "Brandon University requires that all faculty members, staff, and students adhere to the *BUREC Policies and Procedures*. The University considers non-compliance and the inappropriate treatment of human participants to be a serious offence, subject to penalties, including, but not limited to, formal written documentation including permanently in one's personnel file, suspension of ethics certification, withdrawal of privileges to conduct research involving humans, and/or disciplinary action."

Principal Investigator:	Ms. Georgette Nyankson, Brandon University
Title of Project:	Examining the Participation of Women in the Formulation of Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy (FASDEP II): A Case Study in Ejisu-Juabeng Municipality of Ghana
Co-Investigators:	n/a
Faculty Supervisor: (if applicable)	Dr. Rachel Herron, Brandon University
Research Ethics File #:	22535
Date of Approval:	September 20, 2019
Ethics Expiry Date:	September 202, 2024
Authorizing Signature:	 Mr. Christopher Hurst Chair, Brandon University Research Ethics Committee (BUREC)



September 20, 2019

Ms. Georgette Nyankson  
1-37 Cornell Bay  
Brandon MB R7A 6Y1

Dear Ms. Nyankson,

**RE: Brandon University Research Ethics Application - #22535**

Thank you for submitting the requested information as per the correspondence sent by the Brandon University Research Ethics Committee (BUREC) on September 12, 2019. I am pleased to report that the ethics application entitled "Examining the Participation of Women in the Formulation of Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy (FASDEP II): A Case Study in Ejisu-Juabeng Municipality of Ghana" is now approved.

Enclosed is the Ethics Certificate for this project. **Please note that the first Annual Progress Report is due September 20, 2020.**

As per *BUREC Policies and Procedures*, Annual Progress Reports and a Final Report at the conclusion of the project are requirements for the continuing approval of ethics applications. In addition, ethics approval is granted for a maximum of five years. If this project is continuing beyond that time, a new application is required prior to the expiration date. For more information and for access to the Annual Progress and Final Report forms, please visit [www.brandonu.ca/burec](http://www.brandonu.ca/burec).

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Mrs. Shannon Downey, Administrative Officer to the Vice-President (Academic & Provost) and Research Ethics Officer, at (204) 727-9712 or [downeys@brandonu.ca](mailto:downeys@brandonu.ca).

I wish you success in your research endeavour.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christopher D. Hurst".

Mr. Christopher Hurst  
Chair, Brandon University Research Ethics Committee (BUREC)

smd

Enclosure

C Dr. Rachel Herron, Faculty of Science (Geography), Brandon University

## **Appendix B: Recruitment Scripts**

### **Recruitment Script for Agriculture Female Households**

Greetings. My name is Georgette Nyankson. I am a student at Brandon University pursuing Masters in Rural Development in Brandon-Manitoba, Canada. I am carrying out a study to “examine the participation of women in the formulation of Food and Agricultural sector Development policy: a case study in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality” as a partial fulfilment of my Master’s in Rural Development degree. I am in your community to collect data on your daily experiences on agriculture decision-making and policy formulation. This research will request a face-to face- interview which will take approximately one hour of time. The interview will be audio-recorded and written notes taken. The research requires females from agriculture households who are more than 29 years of age and have engaged in agriculture production/ activities for more than 12 years in this municipality.

You are free to withdraw from the study at any time before February 2020. Also, you can choose not to answer any questions that you do not want to without penalty or consequences or withdraw right away. You can withdraw by phoning me after the interview through WhatsApp call with a number registered strictly for the study. If you do withdraw from the study, the information you provided will not be used unless you consent to this at the time of withdrawal.

There will be no direct benefit to you or your community through the research. However, the summary of the research findings will be made available to the community leaders and the Municipal Assembly. This can be used for lobbying, advocacy, planning and education if so desired by decision makers to enhance agriculture development and food security. There are no anticipated risks that have been identified as part of this study.

I will need volunteer to participate in this community. If you would like to participate in this research, please come talk to me. I will write down fake names of volunteers and a pickup time chosen by participants for the interview. The interview will take place at a secured and convenient places chosen by the researcher.

Thank you

## **Recruitment Script for Agriculture Stakeholders**

Greetings. My name is Georgette Nyankson. I am a student at Brandon University pursuing Masters in Rural Development in Brandon-Manitoba, Canada. I am carrying out a study to “examine the participation of women in the formulation of Food and Agricultural sector Development policy: a case study in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality” as a partial fulfilment of my Master’s in Rural Development degree. I am in your community to collect data on your daily experiences on agriculture decision-making and policy formulation. This research will request a face-to-face- interview which will take approximately one hour of time. The interview will be audio-recorded and written notes taken. The research requires agriculture stakeholders who have worked in this department for more than 12 years.

You are free to withdraw from the study at any time before February 2020. Also, you can choose not to answer any questions that you do not want to without penalty or consequences. You can withdraw right away or after the interview by phoning me through WhatsApp call with a number registered strictly for the study. If you do withdraw from the study, the information you provided will not be used unless you consent to this at the time of withdrawal.

There will be no direct benefit to you or your organisation through the research. However, the summary of the research findings will be made available to the community leaders and the Municipal Assembly. This can be used for lobbying, advocacy, planning and education if so desired by decision makers to enhance agriculture development and food security. There are no anticipated risks that have been identified as part of this study.

I will need appropriate stakeholders who work for women in this department to volunteer to participate. Kindly write down fake name and choose appropriate time convenient to you on the sheet circulating around. Stakeholders will meet me at this same place at the scheduled time. The interview will take place at a secured and convenient venue chosen by the researcher.

Thank you.

### Participants List

<b>Fake name</b>	<b>Pickup time (a day or two days period after the announcement)</b>
	8:00 am
	10: 00 am
	12:00 pm
	2:00 pm
	4:00 pm

### Local Radio Service Script

Greetings. My name is Georgette Nyankson. I am a student at Brandon University pursuing Masters in Rural Development in Brandon-Manitoba, Canada. I am carrying out a study to “examine the participation of women in the formulation of Food and Agricultural sector Development policy: a case study in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality” as a partial fulfilment of my Master’s in Rural Development degree. I am in your community to collect data on your daily experiences on agriculture decision-making and policy formulation.

I would like to meet farmwomen who are 30 years old and above at the community meeting for a short meeting which will take approximately 20 minutes of your time. The time for the meeting is tomorrow, 9am.

Thank you.

## **Appendix C: Informed Consent Forms**

### **Informed Consent Form for Participants**

**Primary Contact:** Georgette Nyankson, Masters Student, Brandon University

WhatsApp number: +233245916108/ [NYANKSG85@brandon.ca](mailto:NYANKSG85@brandon.ca)

**Supervisor:** Dr. Rachel Herron [HerronR@brandon.ca](mailto:HerronR@brandon.ca)

**Project Title:** Examining the participation of Women in the Formulation of Food and Agricultural sector Development Policy (FASDEP II): A Case Study in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality of Ghana.

This form gives you the basic idea of what this research is about and what your participation will involve. Please read this carefully. If you need more detail or information, please ask.

**Purpose of Study:** The project seeks is to:

- To examine how women were included in the formulation of the Food and Agricultural sector Development Policy (FASDEP II) in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality.
- To identify factors hindering women's involvement in the formation of Food and Agricultural sector Development Policy in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality.
- To make recommendations for municipal policy and practice that will promote more meaningful and comprehensive participation of women.

**What participation involves:** I am collecting information from household female farmers/agriculture stakeholders who are 30 years old and above about their experiences and perceptions of participation in agriculture policymaking in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality. Female agriculture households should be engaged in agriculture production for more than 12 years /agriculture stakeholders' participants should have worked in the municipality for more than 12 years since the policy was formulated in 2007. In this phase of data collection, you have agreed to participate in a one on one interview that will take approximately one hour in a time and a place that is convenient and safe for you. I will ask some background questions about yourself (e.g What is your marital status?). I will make written notes during the discussion. The discussion will be audio-recorded (tape-recorded), to make sure the notes are accurate.

**Confidentiality:** Any information collected in this research will be kept strictly confidential. All information from the research will be kept in a secure location (password-protected computer for electronic versions; locked cabinet for hard copies) and only I will have access to the transcripts. Any potential identifying information (such as names or places) will be deleted from the written transcripts. To ensure that you cannot be identified in the results, you will be given a fake name and any information that could identify you will be removed. Data will be destroyed two years after project defense (2022).

**Communication of Results:**

- Results from this research will be provided to the municipal assemblies and community leaders.
- The research report in the form of a master's thesis will be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Brandon University and will be available through the University Library.
- The research results will be presented at both academic and policy conferences. Your personal confidentiality will be maintained throughout.

**Possible benefits and risks:** There will be no direct benefit to you or your community through the research. There are no incentives for participation, nor are there any possibility for commercialization of the results. However, the summary of the research findings will be made available to the community leaders and the Municipal Assembly. This can be used for lobbying, advocacy, planning and education if so desired by decision makers to enhance agriculture development and food security. There are no anticipated risks that have been identified as part of this study.

**Withdrawal from the study:** You are free to withdraw from the study at any time before February 2020. Also, you can choose not to answer any questions that you do not want to without penalty or consequences. You can withdraw by phoning me after the interview through WhatsApp call with a number registered strictly for the study. If you do withdraw from the study, the information you provided will not be used unless you consent to this at the time of withdrawal.

**Consent: Your verbal agreement to this consent form means that you understand:**

- The information provided in this form.
- That you are agreeing to participate in this study.
- That you do not give up your legal rights.
- That the researcher has legal responsibilities to those participating in the study.
- That you can ask questions at any time during the study.
- That you are satisfied with the answers to all your questions.
- That you are free to withdraw from the study at any time, without any consequences, and that doing so will not affect you now or in the future.
- That any data collected from you up to the point of your withdrawal will be destroyed unless you give consent with respect to this.

If participants have any questions, they should contact me on WhatsApp number: +233245916108. This study has been reviewed and approved by the Brandon University Research Ethics Committee (BUREC). For questions regarding participants' rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Brandon University Research Ethics Committee (BUREC), (+1204-727-9712; [burec@brandonu.ca](mailto:burec@brandonu.ca)).

**If you agree to each of the following, I will check mark in the box beside the text. If you do not agree, I will leave the box blank.**



- ☐ I have read, or made the researcher read to me the details of this consent form.
- ☐ I have understood what this study is about and understood the risks and benefits. I have had adequate time to think about this and had the opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered.
- ☐ I agree to verbally participate in this study.
- ☐ I understand my participation is voluntary, and that I may end my participation at any time.
- ☐ I agree to be audio-recorded and to have written notes taken during the interview.
- ☐ I understand that my name will not be identified in any publications resulting from this study.
- ☐ A copy of this Informed Consent Form has been given to me for my records.

By consenting, you have not waived any rights to legal recourse in the event of research-related harm.

---

Signature/Thumbprint of Participant

Date\_\_\_\_\_

---

Signature of Principal Investigator

Date\_\_\_\_\_

### **Informed Consent Form for Community Leaders**

**Primary Contact:** Georgette Nyankson, Masters Student, Brandon University

WhatsApp number: +233245916108/ [NYANKSG85@brandon.ca](mailto:NYANKSG85@brandon.ca)

**Supervisor:** Dr. Rachel Herron [HerronR@brandon.ca](mailto:HerronR@brandon.ca)

**Project Title:** Examining the participation of Women in the Formulation of Food and Agricultural sector Development Policy (FASDEP II): A Case Study in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality of Ghana.

**Purpose of Study:** The project seeks is to:

- To examine how women were included in the formulation of the Food and Agricultural sector Development Policy (FASDEP II) in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality.
- To identify factors hindering women's involvement in the formation of Food and Agricultural sector Development Policy in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality.
- To make recommendations for municipal policy and practice that will promote more meaningful and comprehensive participation of women.

**What participation involves:** I am collecting information from household female farmers who are 30 years and above about their experiences and perceptions of participation in agriculture policymaking in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality. The information will be collected through interviews, which will take approximately one hour of participants' time. The project will recruit participants through a systematic process. I will need to make recruitment announcement during one of your community meetings and I will request your permission to do so. In case, there is no meeting, I will request your permission to use your local radio services to make brief announcement to gather female farmers who are 30 years of age and above.

I will seek for your permission to use your local radio services to gather farmwomen who are 30 years old and above; therefore, meet them at the community center for a short meeting regarding my project. I will check a box below if you approve this request.

**Confidentiality:** Any information collected in this research will be kept strictly confidential. All information from the research will be kept in a secure location (password-protected computer for electronic versions; locked cabinet for hard copies) and only I will have access to the transcripts. Any potential identifying information (such as names or places) will be deleted from written transcripts. Participants will not be identified in the results; they will be given a fake name and any information that could identify them will be removed. Data will be destroyed two years after project defense.

### **Communication of Results:**

- Results from this research will be provided to the municipal assemblies and community leaders.
- The research report in the form of a master's thesis will be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Brandon University and will be available through the University Library.
- The research results will be presented at both academic and policy conferences. Participants' confidentiality will be maintained throughout.

**Possible benefits and risks:** There will be no direct benefit to participants or their community through the research. There are no incentives for participation, nor are there any possibility for commercialization of the results. However, the summary of the research findings will be made available to the community leaders and the Municipal Assembly. This can be used for lobbying, advocacy, planning and education if so desired by decision makers to enhance agriculture development and food security. There are no anticipated risks that have been identified as part of this study.

**Withdrawal from the study:** Participants are free to withdraw from the study at any time before February 2020. Also, they can choose not to answer any questions that they do not want to without penalty or consequences. Participants can withdraw by phoning me after the interview through WhatsApp call with a number registered strictly for the study. If they do withdraw from the study, the information they provided will not be used unless you consent to this at the time of withdrawal.

If participants have any questions, they should contact me on WhatsApp number: +233245916108. This study has been reviewed and approved by the Brandon University Research Ethics Committee (BUREC). For questions regarding participants' rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Brandon University Research Ethics Committee (BUREC), (+1204-727-9712; [burec@brandonu.ca](mailto:burec@brandonu.ca))

**If you agree to each of the following, I will check mark in the box beside the text. If you do not agree, I will leave the box blank.**

☐ I have read or made the researcher read to me, what this study is about and understood the risks and benefits.

☐ I have had adequate time to think about this and had the opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered.

☐ I approve all the project execution procedures by the researcher in this community.

(Interviews)

☐ I will recommend safe and convenient venues for the interview session.

☐ I agree to allow the researcher make recruitment announcement in the community either during community meetings or through radio broadcast services.

By consenting, you have not waived any rights to legal recourse in the event of research-related harm.

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Thumbprint of Community Leader

Date\_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of Principal Investigator

Date\_\_\_\_\_

## **Informed Consent Form for Municipal Assembly Director**

**Primary Contact:** Georgette Nyankson, Masters Student, Brandon University

2044418182/ [NYANKSG85@brandon.ca](mailto:NYANKSG85@brandon.ca)

**Supervisor:** Dr. Rachel Herron [HerronR@brandon.ca](mailto:HerronR@brandon.ca)

**Project Title:** Examining the participation of Women in the Formulation of Food and Agricultural sector Development Policy (FASDEP II): A Case Study in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality of Ghana.

**Purpose of Study:** The project seeks is to:

1. To examine how women were included in the formulation of the Food and Agricultural sector Development Policy (FASDEP II) in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality.
2. To identify factors hindering women's involvement in the formation of Food and Agricultural sector Development Policy in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality.
3. To make recommendations for municipal policy and practice that will promote more meaningful and comprehensive participation of women.

**What participation involves:** I am collecting information from household female farmers who are 30 years old and above about their experiences and perceptions of participation in agriculture decision-making and policymaking in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality. The information will be collected through interviews, which will take approximately one hour of participants' time. I will seek for your permission to make an announcement at one of your department meetings.

**Confidentiality:** Any information collected in this research will be kept strictly confidential. All information from the research will be kept in a secure location (password-protected computer for electronic versions; locked cabinet for hard copies) and only I will have access to the transcripts. Any potential identifying information (such as names or places) will be deleted from the written transcript. Participants will not be identified in the results; they will be given a fake name and any information that could identify them will be removed. Data will be destroyed two years after project defense.

### **Communication of Results:**

- Results from this research will be provided to the municipal assemblies and community leaders.
- The research report in the form of a master's thesis will be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Brandon University and will be available through the University Library.
- The research results will be presented at both academic and policy conferences. Participants' personal confidentiality will be maintained throughout.

**Possible benefits and risks:** There will be no direct benefit to participants or their community through the research. There are no incentives for participation, nor are there any possibility for commercialization of the results. However, the summary of the research findings will be made available to the community leaders and the Municipal Assembly. This can be used for lobbying,

advocacy, planning and education if so desired by decision makers to enhance agriculture development and food security. There are no anticipated risks that have been identified as part of this study.

**Withdrawal from the study:** Participants are free to withdraw from the study at any time before February 2020. Also, they can choose not to answer any questions that they do not want to without penalty or consequences. Participants can withdraw by phoning me after the interview through WhatsApp call with a number registered strictly for the study. If participants do withdraw from the study, the information they provided will not be used unless you consent to this at the time of withdrawal.

If participants have any questions, they should contact me on WhatsApp number: +233245916108. This study has been reviewed and approved by the Brandon University Research Ethics Committee (BUREC). For questions regarding participants' rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Brandon University Research Ethics Committee (BUREC), (+1204-727-9712; [burec@brandonu.ca](mailto:burec@brandonu.ca))

**If you agree to each of the following, please check mark in the box beside the text. If you do not agree, please leave the box blank.**

☐ I have read or made the researcher read to me, what this study is about and understood the risks and benefits.

☐ I have had adequate time to think about this and had the opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered.

☐ I approve all the project execution procedures by the researcher in this department.  
(Interviews)

☐ I agree to allow the researcher make recruitment announcement during one of our department meetings.

☐ I will recommend safe and convenient venues for the interview session.

By consenting, you have not waived any rights to legal recourse in the event of research-related harm.

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Signature of Director

Date\_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of Principal Investigator

Date\_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix D: Interview Guides**

### **Interview Guide for Women in Agriculture Household**

#### **Part A: Background**

1. How long have you lived in this community? (Prompt: Why did you stay here?)
2. How long have you engaged in farming in your community? (Prompt: Why you are engaged in Farming?)
3. What agriculture activities are you engaged in your community? (Prompt: kinds of crop?)
4. Which agriculture resources (e.g. land, implements, labour, credit, extension services etc) are accessible to you in your community?
- 4a. Who provides those resources?
- 4b. How do you access agriculture resources in your community (Prompt: cash payment/inheritance/government etc.)?
5. Which challenges do you face in accessing agriculture resources in your community?
6. What do you suggest can help address the challenges faced in accessing agriculture resources in your community?

#### **Part B: Agriculture Decision-making in household**

7. What kind of agriculture decisions are made in your household?
8. How do you participate in agriculture decision-making in your household?
9. What challenges do you face to participate in agriculture decision-making in your household? List top three?
10. How do you deal with the challenges in participating in agriculture decision-making in your household?
11. What do you suggest can help resolved the challenges faced in participating in agriculture decision-making in your household?

#### **Part C: Agriculture Decision-making in community**

12. What kind of agriculture decisions are made in your community?
13. How do you participate in agriculture decision-making in your community?
14. What challenges do you face to participate in agriculture decision-making in your household and community? List top three?
15. How do you deal with the challenges in participating in agriculture decision-making in your household and community?
16. What do you suggest can help resolved the challenges faced in participating in agriculture decision-making in your community?

#### **Part D: Decision-making in Farmer Based organizations**

17. Do you have access to join farmer-based organization in your community? (Prompt: Yes or No?).

17ai If no; why and are you willing to join and participate in farmer-based organizations? (Explain why)

17aii. What challenges do you face to join or participate in farmer-based organization in your community?

17aiii. Can you give suggestions on how those challenges can be addressed?

17bi. If yes; why are you a member? Prompt: What is the importance of joining the organization?

17bii. What kind of agriculture decisions are made in your organizations?

17biii. Do women participate actively in agriculture decisions in your organizations? Explain?

17biv. What can be done to improve active participation of women in decision-making in your organization?

17bv. What challenges do you face as a member of the organization and give suggestions on how they can be resolved?

#### **Part E: Participating in Food and Agricultural sector Development Policy (FASDEP)**

18. Did you feel involved in the formulation of agriculture policies (FASDEP) in the Municipality? Please explain?

19. How did you want to be involved in the formulation of FASDEP in Ghana?

20. What do you think are some of the challenges that prevented you from participating actively?

21. Can you please give some recommendation on addressing those challenges?

#### **Part F: Conclusion**

22. Do you have anything that you would like to add that you feel is important to understand participation of women in decision-making and policy formulation in your municipality?

23. How old are you?

24. What is your marital status?

25. What is your educational background?



## **Interview Guide for Agriculture Stakeholders**

### **Questions:**

#### **Part A: Roles and Responsibility of the Organization**

1. What are the roles and responsibilities of your organization in the agricultural sector in the municipality?

#### **Part B: Agriculture Activities in the Municipality**

2. What agriculture activities are practiced by women in this municipality?
3. What kind of resources are provided by the organization to farmwomen to support their activities?
4. What challenges do the organization face in providing agriculture resources to farmwomen in your municipality?
5. What do you suggest can help address the challenges faced in providing agriculture resources in the municipality?
6. How are women's agriculture output recorded and documented in the municipality?
7. Explain the challenges faced by the organization in documenting women's agriculture output in the municipality?
8. What do you suggest can help keep accurate records of women agriculture output in the municipality?

#### **Part C: Decision-making Process**

9. What kind of agriculture decisions are made in your organization?
10. What is the decision-making process in your organization?
11. Can you please explain the stakeholder's involvement in agriculture decision-making process in your organization?
12. How does the organization involve women in agriculture decision-making in the municipality? (Prompt: Benefits of including women in the process)
13. What challenges are faced by the organization to involve women in the formulation of agriculture decisions in the municipality?

#### **Part D: Gender Mainstreaming**

14. How does the organisation ensure gender mainstreaming in the agricultural sector in the municipality? (Prompt: Challenges involved?)

#### **Part E: Participating in Food and Agricultural sector Development Policy (FASDEP)**

15. How was your organisation involved in the formulation of Food and Agricultural sector Policy?
16. How were women involved in the formulation of the Food and Agricultural sector Development Policy? Explain

17. How would your organization like to be involved in the formulation of the Food and Agricultural sector Policy?
18. How did your organization involve or wanted to involve farmwomen in the communities to contribute to the formulation of Food and Agricultural sector Development Policy or other agriculture policies in the municipality?
19. What do you think are the challenges faced by the government in involving women in the municipality (stakeholders and farmers) in the formulation of the Food and Agricultural sector Policy?

**Part F: Conclusion**

20. Do you have anything that you would like to add which is important to understand participation of women in decision-making and policy formulation in your municipality?